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**HANSARD'S  
PARLIAMENTARY  
DEBATES:**

**Third Series;**

**COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF  
WILLIAM IV.**

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**4<sup>o</sup> VICTORIÆ, 1841.**

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**VOL. LVIII.**

**COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM  
THE SEVENTH DAY OF MAY,  
TO  
THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF JUNE, 1841.**

*Last Volume of the Session.*

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**L O N D O N:**

**THOMAS CURSON HANSARD, PATERNOSTER ROW;  
LONGMAN AND CO.; C. DOLMAN; J. RODWELL; J. BOOTH; HATCHARD AND  
SON; J. RIDGWAY; CALKIN AND BUDD; R. H. EVANS; J. BIGG AND SON;  
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AND GRADOCK AND CO.**

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**DURING THE *FOURTH SESSION* OF THE *THIRTEENTH*  
*PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT*  
*BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET 11  
SEPTEMBER, 1837, AND FROM THENCE CONTINUED TILL  
26 JANUARY, 1841, IN THE FOURTH YEAR OF THE REIGN  
OF HER MAJESTY**

**THIRD VOLUME OF THE SESSION.**

**Friday, May 7, 1841.**

**SUGAR DUTIES.]** The Earl of *Harwood* presented several petitions from the parishes of Port Royal, St. Mary, St. George, St. James, and St. Thomas, in Jamaica, against any alteration of the sugar duties. He also begged to present a petition from a large body of West-India proprietors, and others, connected with that colony, agreed to at a public meeting, held in the metropolis, making a similar prayer. The petitioners stated, that if slave-grown sugar were admitted into England, the proprietors of the island of Jamaica would be unable to carry on those measures of

improvement which they had lately begun. They also felt, that the contemplated alteration would be an encouragement to the slave-trade, which this country had made such great sacrifices to suppress. He did not wish to say anything disagreeable to any party, but he thought it most extraordinary, that such a measure should be proposed, when it was known, that our colonies were about recovering from the state of embarrassment and adversity which the great change of the emancipation of the slaves had necessarily and naturally produced. He thought, that that proposal, if carried into effect, would be most injurious to moral and religious improvement throughout the world, and almost fatal to the population of the West Indies. For his own part, putting these considerations out of the question, he much doubted whether the contemplated change would produce the effect which had been anticipated. He had not much faith in the new theories now so much in fashion, and of late we had had so many of these experiments, and in no case did they succeed. There

had been the new scheme of Post-office regulation, and there had been other notable schemes for improving our condition, but, despite of them all, it was still found, that our expenditure far exceeded our revenue. He was not, therefore, very sanguine, judging from the experience of the past, of the success of the present measure, merely on financial and fiscal considerations. He could not agree to it, because he had no confidence in such theories. It had been said, that revenue could be obtained without taxation. He did not know by what machinery it was done—by what means so glorious a consummation was to be accomplished. This country had, during the course of the last year, been engaged in two wars, and these wars, it was to be supposed, had been commenced, and had been carried on for national purposes—for the benefit of the nation at large—and, if this were the case, surely the people of the country who had been thus benefited, could not reasonably refuse, nor, indeed, would be unwilling, to meet the expense in another generous and straightforward manner, by the usual method of taxation. By this scheme, they ran the risk of ruining utterly and completely the colonists of the empire. But, supposing, that the effect of the plan would be such as was anticipated, and that it would produce a vast revenue, in addition to that which already flowed into the coffers of the nation, still he would object to it on other and higher grounds. He would object on one great and important principle. He objected to it, because it must necessarily increase the slave-trade. And for this one simple reason—if their Lordships were sure, that by this new scheme, they would materially raise the revenue, they ought not to adopt it. How could they say—and this they had said—to any other country, “You must not carry on your trade in slaves—you must cease to encourage, or even tolerate, a traffic so abominable?” How could they say this to any foreign country, when they were themselves, by their own general plan of policy, doing that which above all things would increase and extend the trafficking in slaves? Their own acts would belie their words. They had already spent twenty millions at one time, and twenty millions more at other times, and in ways less direct, to suppress this trade in our own colonies, and now, such was their consistency, they were proposing a scheme to raise and extend slavery in other quarters

of the globe. The trade of the country was not conducted on sound and honest principles. New schemes were afloat—speculations on foreign credit were carried on to a large extent—the bill system, with all its evil and nefarious consequences, was in vogue, and men of straw existed to an amount that was to be deplored; and, in his opinion, it would be better that our trade should be diminished, than that it should be increased on such a basis. If we imported Brazilian sugar, the money given for it must necessarily go to purchase slaves. He had taken the present opportunity of thus expressing his sentiments on a question of such vital interest; but he would now trespass on their Lordships’ attention no further than to present the petition to which he had alluded. He also begged to present a petition from the Colonial Society, which concluded with a similar prayer to that which he had already read.

The Earl of Mountcashel said, the petition just presented from the Colonial Society had been agreed to at a meeting where he presided, and as he now rose for the purpose of presenting another petition, he should take the opportunity of saying a few words upon the subject of the petition just presented by the noble Earl near him. The Colonial Society was composed of more than 1,000 members—men of all shades of political opinions and principles, Whig, Tory, and Radical—but when they met to discuss the grievance of which the petition complained, they forgot all political distinctions, and united as one man in their resistance to changes in the existing law.

Earl Fitzwilliam thought it was not usual for a noble Lord to rise to address the House on one petition, and then to present another. The noble Earl had said, that the Colonial Society was composed of men of all political principles. Now, he understood the profession of political principles to be equivalent to the expression of a determination to pursue and promote the public interest according to certain specified modes of action. Here then, was a set of men professing to be Whigs, Tories, and Radicals, who forgot their public principles the moment their own private interests were in any danger.

The Earl of Mountcashel contended, that the course he had pursued was in perfect accordance with the practice of their Lordships’ House. The noble Earl

concluded by presenting a petition from the inhabitants of Antigua, against any alteration in the sugar duties. The petition was signed by every class amongst the inhabitants of that colony, including many free coloured labourers.

The Earl of Radnor said, there was no reason why the people of this country should not enjoy refined sugar at 3½d. per pound, instead of paying 7d. for coarse sugar. From the most recent and correct intelligence on the condition of Antigua, he was enabled to say, that the produce of sugar there had more than doubled since the introduction of free labour, and that the value of land had increased more than four or five-fold. He had been reading that morning *Gurney's Tour through the West Indies*, in which it was stated, that ever since slavery had been abolished, sugar had increased in price, and could be produced at less cost, which fact clearly established, that free-grown sugar could compete with sugar, the produce of slave colonies.

The Earl of Mountcashel said, that Brazilian sugar, after having been sent to England and refined, and then sent out to the West Indies, could be sold at a lower rate than that which was produced in our own colonies. He thought that fact proved that free could not compete with slave-made sugar.

The Earl of Harewood thought, that if the statement of Mr. Gurney were a true one, that the improved method of production rendered the price of West-India sugar much cheaper than it had formerly been, surely there was less necessity for the introduction of foreign sugar from countries where slavery was practised.

Lord Ashburton was desirous of explaining the fact as to the consumption of slave-grown sugar in the West Indies. The sugar which was refined in bond was sent there, and no duty was paid upon it, and so the population of the West Indies consumed the sugar without duty, instead of the people of this country consuming with the duty. If its amount were considerable, perhaps it might be made a fair subject of revenue; but this was not the case. As to the statement that sugar from our colonies was no dearer than slave-grown sugar, he must state his belief that the Gentleman who had expressed that opinion, influenced, as no doubt he was, by the best feelings of humanity, had been led away by such feelings, and his judg-

ment had been somewhat biased. The strongest proof of the contrary was afforded by the fact, that the change made in our colonies by the abolition of slavery had been followed by the greatly increased price of sugar; and, as the cause of that increase, the reduced quantity of its supply. Whatever might be the cause of Antigua, or of any particular locality, where separate and individual and distinct causes operated, this unquestionably was the fact throughout the greater number of the West-India Islands. It was certain, as far as our experience had yet gone, that the establishment of freedom had greatly reduced the supply of sugar. It had been stated by the noble Earl (Fitzwilliam) that the petitioners whose claims had been laid before their Lordships were interested parties, and, consequently, that little weight was due to their opinions. But, in his view of the matter, if ever petitioners were entitled to be listened to with the deepest attention and the most careful consideration, these petitioners who now came before them, whose prospects, whose fortunes, and whose condition, were at stake, were especially so; and as for their opinions, he, for one, would certainly attach more value to the judgments and conclusions of men practically acquainted with the subject on which they spoke than to those metaphysical Gentlemen who dealt in such wild and extravagant fancies, rather—much rather—than to the very wise and profound Members of such bodies as the Anti-Corn-Law League. He would repeat, that of all the petitions that came before the House, those were most entitled to respect which proceeded from practical men.

CHINA.] Lord Ellenborough said, that he had presented a petition the other evening from the merchants of Bombay, on the subject of our relations with China. He understood that it had been intimated in another place that her Majesty's Ministers had come to the determination not to ratify any treaty with the Emperor of China based on the preliminary articles agreed to by Captain Elliot. He wished to know of her Majesty's Government, whether that were the decision of the Governor-general of India, or the Government at home? He wished to know, whether it was the noble Viscount's intention to recommend her Majesty not to ratify that treaty?

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that it was certainly true, that it was impossible for the Government to know what might have been the ultimate and definitive treaty based on the preliminary articles to which the noble Earl had alluded; but unquestionably there had been sent out instructions to the effect, that if a definitive treaty had been concluded, grounded on these preliminary articles, it would not be satisfactory to the Government, and that it was not his intention to advise her Majesty to ratify it. The decision was come to by the Government at home, and not by the Governor-general of India.

The Duke of *Wellington* wished to know, whether the island of Hong Kong had been taken possession of under the treaty?

Viscount *Melbourne* believed it had.

Lord *Ellenborough* wished to know, whether the island of Chusan had been evacuated?

Viscount *Melbourne*: He did not know. Subject at an end.

THE CORN-LAWS.] Earl *Fitzwilliam* presented petitions from Kendal and Halifax, praying for a repeal of the Corn-laws. The noble Earl also presented a petition on the same subject, of which he had given notice yesterday, from the town of Leeds; and considering the great importance, and the station of that town, he hoped their Lordships would allow him to read the petition. The noble Earl read the petition, the substance of which was, that the present Corn-laws were based in the opinion of the petitioners on the baneful principle of benefitting a particular class at the expense of the community—that the most severe and extensive distress had resulted from those laws during the last three years—that they had led to an immense destruction of manufacturing capital—to severe privations on the part of the labouring classes, and to a derangement of the currency, which had injuriously effected both public and private credit. The petitioners also stated, that the laws tended to encourage rival manufacturers in other countries; and they concluded by praying for a repeal of so injurious a system of monopoly. The petition was signed by 25,000 persons, which was, in fact, the entire adult male population of Leeds.

Lord *Ashburton* expressed his regret that the Ministry had, by the announce-

ment they had made on the subject of the Corn-laws, stirred up so much ill blood and bad feeling in the country as would be sure to result from the agitation of the question, particularly at the present period, when the country was already distracted by divisions on church-rates and poor-laws. He should observe, that the agriculturists of this country had not at any time for centuries been left without some protective laws. At so remote a period as the year 1463, the importation of foreign corn was prohibited, when the price was under 15s. 10½d. — a sufficiently high sum for that time; but in the year 1670, importation was prohibited until the price reached 53s. 4d. There was a further increase in the protective duty in the reign of King William, and subsequently at various periods laws had been passed of a similar tendency. The fact was, that it was not protection that was novelty; the novelty would be in withdrawing protection. It should be remembered, too, that there was no country in Europe in which there were not some provisions made for the protection of native agriculture. If it were said, that other countries would be ready to open their ports for our manufactures, in case we admitted their corn, he thought that the supposition was a most erroneous one. He would be ready to put the whole question on that issue; and if he could be assured that Prussia or France, or any other country on the Continent, would make to us the slightest concessions in return for a repeal of our Corn-laws, he would not press his opinions on the subject. He was convinced they would make no concessions; and it would be idle to entertain any hope of that nature. If the Corn-laws were repealed, a small country like England could not still hope to manufacture for the rest of the world. Other nations should have their share of trade; and the most dependent of people would be those who looked to others for their supply of food. That would be the most miserable of situations.

The Earl of *Wicklow* was surprised at the tone assumed by the noble Earl (*Fitzwilliam*) on presenting this petition, inasmuch as last night the noble Earl said his opinion corresponded with those of her Majesty's Ministers. Now, her Majesty's Ministers were opposed to that which these petitioners prayed for, viz., a total abolition of protection, for they said a protecting duty of 8s. was necessary, and



when these petitioners found that in time of scarcity this new plan would fix a duty of 8s. per quarter, whereas, under the present system, the duty would be only 1s., they would, if they were at all consistent, petition against the ministerial plan.

The Earl of *Falmouth* did not think these petitions from Leeds would oppose the Ministerial scheme, as they would look upon it only as a step towards total abolition.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* deprecated such a discussion on the presentation of a petition. Agreeably to the rule of the House he had avoided entering at any length into the question, but had merely read the petition. Though he thought that the landed interest were large debtors to the community, yet he doubted very much whether they would suffer any thing from the repeal of the corn-laws. He did not believe that moderate rents would be much affected by the proposal of Ministers. It was his belief that if any rent now existing was fair and moderate, in comparison with the averages which have prevailed for any long period of years (ten, fifteen, or twenty years)—that, looking forward to any equal period commencing now—wheat being importable at a fixed duty of 8s. per quarter—the same, or very nearly the same, rent would be maintained. He founded this opinion, in great measure, upon the improvements which have been made of late years, both in the science and practice of agriculture, and upon his expectation that those improvements would be progressive. But, with respect to rents which have been recently fixed, in consequence of advantage being taken of the high prices that have prevailed during the last few years, he believed that such rents must give way. He thought that the landed interests totally misunderstood what were their real interests.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that notwithstanding the observation of the noble Earl, that it was too bad to defend these laws, he (the Duke of Wellington) should persist in defending them as long as he should have an opportunity of addressing their Lordships on the subject. He thought it was too bad that this species of vituperation which had been pronounced that evening should be indulged in against the landed interest, night after night, whenever the noble Lord presented a petition. If the noble Lord thought that there was no apprehension of falling rents, the noble Lord might at least suppose that the minds

of others might have been enlightened on that subject as well as his own; and he (the Duke of Wellington) thought that the noble Lord might attribute to others some different motives from those which he imputed to their Lordships on other occasions—other motives besides the desire of maintaining those advantages which they were thought to derive from these laws. But if the noble Lord thought that the landed interest were debtors to the rest of the community, perhaps he (the Duke of Wellington) might venture to compliment the noble Earl by saying that he was a debtor to as large an amount to the rest of the public as those noble Lords on the Opposition side of the House to whom the noble Earl addressed himself. But, whether their Lordships were debtors or not, he (the Duke of Wellington) perfectly agreed with his noble Friend behind him (Lord Ashburton), that these laws were not invented, nor had they been maintained, for the purpose of keeping high rents in the pockets of noble Lords, but that they were invented and had been supported for the purpose of maintaining and supporting agriculture, and of maintaining this country independent of all other countries and parts of the world; and it was also perfectly true, as stated by his noble Friend behind him, that such had been the policy of England for centuries, sometimes by one mode, and sometimes by another, sometimes by imposing protective duties when corn rose above certain prices, and sometimes by giving bounties, and occasionally very large bounties, on the exportation of corn. But whatever had been the means, the object had always been to support the agriculture of the country, in order to render this country, in respect of its subsistence, independent of other nations. This was the object of the improved system introduced in the year 1828; this was the object of those principles which had been maintained ever since; at least it was the principle on which he had given those laws his support, and on which he had more than once asked their Lordships to render this country dependent only on itself for subsistence. This, he said, was the object of the corn laws, and not that dirty object which had been imputed to their Lordships, and which, he must say, it was too bad to impute to their Lordships—of obtaining large rents from their land. It was also perfectly true, as had been stated by his noble Friend behind him, that there was not a country of Europe in which corn laws did not at that

moment exist; but, nevertheless, he supposed that if it were proposed to repeal these laws and adopt the measures recommended by the petitioners, their Lordships would be told of the quantities of corn that might be had from Russia and from Prussia, and other parts of the world. But were there no corn laws in those countries? Had the noble Earl heard of no laws prohibiting all exportation of corn to other countries? That fact altered the whole state of the question of corn laws in this country. The effect of such a state of things would be most serious if there came a bad season here and there too. Then, again, had the noble Lord not heard of the high duties imposed on the exportation of corn from those countries during the late wars? Had not their Lordships got evidence before some of the committees—had they not got letters from some merchants at Dantzic to one of those governments on the subject of the prices of corn in England, and on the rate of duties imposed at that port? and was it not stated that the increased price obtained from England might be expected to enable those merchants to pay the duties imposed by their government on exportation? Let it be observed, that he did not blame the sovereign to whom he alluded for imposing those duties—he should not have blamed him if it had been an act of war, whereas it was a mere measure of finance. He did not say that he (the Duke of Wellington) agreed with him in his notions of protection; but he said that when he considered it a question of protection, that sovereign was not to be blamed, and that his object was like that of their Lordships, to secure the subsistence of his subjects, and not to cause a rise of rents. Before he sat down he would just observe, that he should not have spoken on this subject but for the turn which the debate had taken, but he thought it would have been but fair in the noble Earl to wait till the question had come fairly before the House, especially as the noble Earl had declared that, in case of the change he anticipated, it would not have a material effect upon rents, and that their Lordships ought not to be attacked in this way night after night without the subject being regularly before them.

The Earl of Radnor said, his noble Friend had not provoked the discussion to-night. The existing Corn-laws had not achieved their professed object, steadiness of prices. Agreeing as he did with the views of the petitioners, he should still prefer a fixed duty to a sliding scale; and

as to what the noble Duke had said, respecting the duties that ought to be imposed by foreign countries on the exportation of their corn, those duties, it must be remembered, were paid by the foreign merchant.

The Earl of Galloway wished to ask, if the present Corn-law had not led to an adequate supply, how it was that the noble Earl opposite, could prove that the improved cultivation had effected such results that no reduction of rent would be apprehended for at least fifteen years.

The Earl of Warwick said, that in his opinion, the Corn-law agitation was only a prelude to an attack on the currency. He believed, that to be the object of the petitioners of Leeds, and also of the manufacturers of Birmingham.

The Earl of Haddington begged to remind the House of the deep interest Ireland had in the maintenance of the Corn-laws. Ireland was peculiarly an agricultural country, and quite capable of becoming a vast granary to this country; but if the present protection was removed, a complete check would be given to all her present cultivation.

The Marquess of Lansdowne did not rise to enter into the discussion that had been partially commenced that evening, because he was perfectly aware that, although such discussions would take place, they were generally attended by the effect of causing assumptions to be made by noble Lords of some points without any opportunity being afforded to prove or disprove those assumptions; but he could not allow this conversation to conclude without stating that, whether his noble Friend opposite (Lord Ashburton) did or did not come down prepared with certain statements and his documents, there was one statement made by him, which, whether he came down prepared to make or not, and which whether he thought it consistent or not with that calmness that he had declared the other night ought to govern those discussions, ought to be noticed—he meant the statement which the noble Lord had made, whether advisedly and considerately or not he would not determine—that the proposal of her Majesty's Government had been brought forward for the purpose of agitating the country; he could not allow the discussion to close without saying, that there never was an affirmation more unfounded in fact. The Government might be correct or not in their view of this question, they might or might not be wrong in

the policy of adopting the views which appeared so dangerous to his noble Friend opposite, but he said distinctly, that there never had been a proposal brought forward that had been more deliberately considered and entertained on its own merits, that had been less hastily determined on, or that had been more adopted from a consideration of the circumstances and the feelings of the country. When his noble Friend assumed that such a proposal could only be made for the purpose of creating sudden dissension and to encourage the ebullition of passions, his noble Friend gave in the course of his own statement a contradiction to the assumption, because his noble Friend proceeded to rehearse scheme after scheme, and plan after plan, proposed by different Ministers, who, having the same object in view, the protection of the trade and of the agriculture of this country, had found it necessary, with their eyes as wide open as those of the noble Lord opposite, and as those of his noble Friend at the head of the Government, had made proposals, and, notwithstanding the anger and warmth of feeling attending these discussions, had, nevertheless, proceeded from time to time to consider the protection to be given to agriculture as it might be suitable to the circumstances of the moment; abandoning the protection given at one period, and grafting it at another, at the risk of giving rise to those discussions, which no one more than he, hoped and wished should be conducted with the absence of passion. He, however, had never heard it imputed to Lord Liverpool, when he changed the system which had existed for many years before—attended though that proposal was with the ebullition of passion that raged through the country—no one had imputed to Lord Liverpool any other motive than an intention to introduce a system better suited to the circumstances of the country. Many years had not elapsed before another Minister (Mr. Canning) saw the necessity of introducing another alteration; no one had imputed any improper motive to him, although his proposal was attended with the same effect of rousing the passions of the multitude. Again, no one had accused the noble Duke opposite of any thing wrong in introducing a third modification of the system. All those eminent persons who had moved these alterations had overlooked the inconvenience of the warmth to which the discussions might awaken. And were the present Ministers to have imputations

cast upon them because they considered the same question when circumstances did arise which presented a combination of consequences not only with respect to the state of the corn but of other duties, and more especially to the protection of agriculture itself; and it had been a peculiar characteristic of that protection that it had frequently overshot its mark, and induced the very authors of the systems to turn round; and endeavour to substitute something that would more certainly conduce to the interests as well of agriculture as of commerce. He was the last person, who would say that the duty of altering the laws ought to be lightly undertaken, but at the present time circumstances had arisen in the commercial world, which rendered it necessary to reconsider this protection; for if it were given for the purpose of making a wealthy country at all times the provider of produce for its own population, it would wholly ruin the proprietors of that country it was intended to benefit, because no protection could be more injurious to a country than that which should induce it to produce at all times the largest possible quantity, since such a production must in times of plenty give rise to such an extreme production as, not being able to be exported must ruin the producers. He would always, therefore, protest against the doctrine, that they ought to make any country wholly independent of other countries. Undoubtedly, this protection was a question of degree, that question might be argued on its own merits; and it must be argued with reference to the details of other duties, for he held that it was a sound rule to apply equal protection to all articles, and it would be unfair to give protection to one application of capital, and to prevent its extension to all others. To the discussion of that question they must come by the occurrence of a painful necessity, and he hoped that noble Lords would not seek to embarrass it by the display of that warmth which the importance of the subject was calculated to produce.

Lord Ellenborough said, that the noble Marquess had been anxious to exculpate the Government from the accusation that they had brought this subject forward from improper motives, by stating the consideration and the deliberation which her Majesty's Government had given to it. There could be no doubt upon that point after the statement of the noble Marquess, but it was a matter of more than mere curiosity to know

at what period those deliberations had taken place, and it would be conducive to the establishment of the correctness of history if the noble Marquess would enrich it by stating upon what day her Majesty's Government had concluded upon bringing the matter forward.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* replied, that it was not necessary to communicate the particular time of the adoption of this proposal by her Majesty's Ministers; but the subject had been repeatedly under their consideration, and that it was not adopted till recently after careful investigation.

Lord *Ashburton* declared, that he had no intention of imputing motives to her Majesty's Government. And as for any future discussion, there was no chance of the matter coming before their Lordships, for there was no property in commerce or in agriculture that would not be put in jeopardy by this sudden change, and it would never be adopted elsewhere.

A Noble Lord asked at what period of the present Session any notice was given in either House of Parliament that could have led to the belief that it was intended to bring this matter forward?

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* replied, that notice was given before the Easter holidays, not specially referring to the Corn-laws, but generally that the whole subject of the trade of this country would be brought under consideration.

The Noble Lord was understood to say, that from this vague notice, no Member dreamt that the Corn-laws were to be altered.

Petition laid on the Table.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, May 7, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Criminal Justice; Boroughs Improvements; Drainage of Towns; Vaccination; Buildings Regulation; Courthouses (Ireland).—Read a second time:—Stamp Duties (Law Proceedings).—Read a third time:—Slave Compensation; Arms (Ireland).

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hutt, from Gateshead, for the Abolition of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. W. Gladstone, Mr. A. Chapman, Mr. Lockhart, Mr. Cresswell, Captain Mathew, Dr. Lushington, and several other hon. Members, from St. Vincent, the Ship Owners Society, London, Chamber of Commerce at Glasgow, Liverpool, and many other places, against the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to Colonial Produce.—By Mr. Thornely, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Wood, Mr. Clay, Mr. Aglionby, and several other Members, from Liverpool, London, Kendal, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and other places, for the Chancellor of the Exchequer's plan for the Reduction of the Duties on Foreign Produce.—By Mr. G. Strickland, and Mr. W. Williams, from Saddleworth, and Coventry, for a Revision of the Import Duties,

CORN-LAWS.] Lord *J. Russell* said, that in fulfilment of the promise he made on a former evening, he now begged to state, that in proposing that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House upon the subject of the Corn-laws, he intended to propose a fixed duty on wheat of 8s. per quarter, upon rye 6s. per quarter, upon barley 4s. 6d. per quarter, and upon oats 3s. 4d. per quarter.

The Earl of *Darlington* said, he supposed the noble Lord considered the agriculturists of this country no longer entitled to protection. When the proper time came for discussing this subject he should be ready to meet the noble Lord. It was not for him to say, whether the noble Lord had taken this course at his own suggestion, or whether, on the other hand, he had adopted the advice of a sage and potent councillor known in cases of deep emergency with a significant toss of the shoulders to give strange advice, or whether it were in consequence of the return of an hon. Gentleman to that House in the cause of humanity, to whom the electors of Nottingham had done so much honour; whether, from any or either of these causes, or whether from all taken in conjunction, he cared not, but this he would prophesy, that the noble Lord would not by devices or tricks of this sort annihilate the landed interest.

SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS.] The order of the day on going into Committee on Ways and Means having been read,

Lord *John Russell* rose and said: Sir, in rising to move that you do now leave the chair, I think it incumbent on me, owing to the notice given by the noble Lord, owing to the discussions that have taken place out of doors, owing to the attitude that has been assumed by various parties, both political and commercial, with respect to the question, to state to the House the general reasons that have influenced the Government in the adoption of the course they have recommended. Sir, I agree with the petition presented a little while ago from certain inhabitants of Bath, that this is a question not to be looked at merely as a commercial and financial one; because if it were of that character, I should willingly leave it in the hands of my right hon. Friend near me, by whom it would be treated with by far more knowledge of the subject, and far

more perspicuity in stating the views of the Government than I can pretend to; but I consider it is a great national question. And there never, perhaps, has been submitted to Parliament a question which will be more important, not merely to the finances of the year, not merely for the commercial regulations of the present time, but for the conduct of the finances of this country, and for the regulation of the commercial affairs of this country for a long time to come, than that which I am now about to submit to the House. Sir, I cannot, however, commence my observations on this subject without adverting to that which I know has been said, and which nothing but the most inveterate hostility to the present Government, and an entire ignorance of the characters of the Members of that Government, can any way palliate. I cannot commence my observations without adverting to the assertion which has been made, that this question was taken up at the spur of the moment on the day before my right hon. Friend brought forward his proposal. Sir, I say that a long habit of hostility to the Government, and a total ignorance in the character of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the other Members of the Government, may afford some palliation for such assertions, but the assertion was a most unfounded one, and one which ought never to have been attempted to be palmed upon the country. The Government knew full well this was a subject of the deepest interest. They were fully aware, from the commencement of the present year, that the state of the finances would require some course to be adopted which would be consistent with the character of the country and the future stability of our trading and commercial interests. Sir, this question naturally occupied much of our time, and long deliberation—the difficulties, the objections, such as had been stated to-night in many of the petitions, were carefully and fully weighed; they made a great impression on some Members of the Government, and on myself; but after a certain length of time it was thought necessary to come to a decision, and the general decision was taken, upon grounds which I shall afterwards state to the House, that the two great questions of sugar and timber, should be undertaken for the sake of the revenue by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and

that I should give notice to the House that, as a general question affecting the protection to the landed interests—affecting the general welfare of the country—that I should bring forward a proposal for an alteration of the Corn-laws. Sir, that resolution was taken some time before my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade gave notice of his resolution with respect to colonial duties, and that notice, I observe from the votes, was given on the 11th of March. Sir, I thought it not right, certainly, that the question should be brought forward before we knew at the end of the financial year the real return of revenue as compared to the expenditure; but I thought it right, when these resolutions were under discussion, to state, which I did emphatically, that all these questions relating to monopoly and restriction had been under the serious consideration of the Government, that the Government was united on these questions, and would be prepared to bring forward other measures when the proper time arrived. I must state, moreover, that it did so happen, on the very day that the budget was brought forward by my right hon. Friend, that I received a letter speaking of the budget as a matter that had been settled upon from the information already given; and this letter came not from a gentleman living some fifty or a hundred miles off, who might have received notice of what was intended within a short space of time; but from the Governor-general of Canada, who had been informed of the intentions of the Government. I therefore think, after this plain statement, that, improbable as the story was before, that it will no longer be attempted to be whispered or palmed upon the public that this was a sudden resolution, adopted on the spur of the moment, from I know not what party motives. Let me state, moreover, in announcing the decision to which the Government has come, that we were not ignorant of the vast interests, and what various portions of the community might be arrayed against us. We have seen this night the results which a combination of those interests can produce. We have seen with how much tenderness those who import timber from Canada view the interests of the negroes. We have seen with what horror the landed gentlemen who oppose the introduction of foreign corn at a fixed duty, which I do not conceive to be an absence of protec-

tion, but which I think will give sufficient protection, with what horror they look upon the sufferings of those men who are taken as slaves to foreign countries. All this, and all those combinations I am prepared to meet, and I know at what disadvantage I stand here, not having to represent gentlemen belonging to any large branch of commerce, or connected with our colonial interests; not speaking the sense of members of a great body combined and associated together, having their subscriptions, and advertisements, and meetings regularly marshalled before the eyes of the public, not speaking of any other body than that—and a very helpless one on most occasions, the great mass of her Majesty's subjects—whose interests, whose welfare, whose fortunes are so deeply involved in the decision to which this House may come. In adverting to the whole of this subject I must not, I cannot, allow the House to separate from its consideration the position in which the Government was placed with regard to finance. There were many questions of very great interest relating to our foreign affairs, relating to our colonial interests, relating to the state of the country at the time, which required an increase of expenditure. It became necessary, in the opinion of the Government, to have a settlement of the question which had long menaced the independence of the Ottoman Porte. It was essential to the honour of the British name that they should demand redress for injuries inflicted upon British subjects by the subjects of the emperor of China. It was necessary to suppress an insurrection that broke out in Canada, the result, as I think, of the legislative arrangements made half a century ago. At one time our domestic tranquillity was threatened, and when we resolved to meet the danger without having recourse to a law of extraordinary coercion, it was necessary to have a sufficient force belonging to her Majesty's troops to preserve the tranquillity of the country. With respect to all those measures, I know not that the House has differed from the opinions of the Government. In respect to some of them, individual Members may have disapproved of the course pursued; but with respect to all of them, they were supported by a great majority of the House of Commons. Of course if these efforts were to be made, it was necessary to endeavour that success

should attend those efforts, and also to consider the means of providing for the increased cost. With respect to the success of those measures, with regard to Eastern affairs, I think that means employed, to the extent to which they were employed in that case, had never been attended with more speedy or more brilliant results. In Canada the insurrection which had raised its head had been effectually put down, and there were now great hopes of seeing a representation in that colony firmly loyal to the British Crown. With respect to our domestic affairs, tranquillity had been established without going beyond the ordinary law of the land. With respect to China, affairs there were yet in an unsettled state, but, as far as the expedition was concerned, as far as our naval and military affairs had proceeded, our success was unquestionable, and our forces have been attended with their usual prosperity. It became, then, necessary to provide for the cost of all these efforts, and we have now to decide upon the principle upon which this cost is to be defrayed. We have an amount, according to the statement of my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of 2,400,000*l.* of excess in the expenditure of the year. I can understand, whatever plans may be adopted, that the opposition in this House, or a party in this House, on whatever side they may sit, may say, that those plans are founded on mistake; that the principle adopted is wrong; but to adopt the scheme of Gentlemen opposite, that of refusing to give any opinion at the time the Budget was brought forward, declining to give any opinion at that time, and now when we propose to go into a committee of the whole House, merely to propose to negative and reject the proposal of Government, without affirming upon what principle of finance they are prepared to proceed; that is a course, which, much as my right hon. Gentlemen opposite may deride it, I do not think becoming any great party. Certainly a step more factious I have never observed in this House. Mind, I am not saying that an opposition ought to state the measures to be taken for restoring the finances. I am not saying that they ought to indicate the taxes to be laid on, or that they should indicate the particular sources from which the public fund was to be repaired. But this is a question with respect to opposite

principles of conduct. We have four courses to pursue; one which, I think, ought at once to be rejected;—namely, that of attempting, by some small and petty modes of taxation, to make up part of the deficiency that has occurred. Another mode is, by means of a loan to repair the finances for the present year. We have considered that question, and we thought upon the whole that it would not be for the advantage of the public credit, seeing that those expenses must be continued, seeing that it was not fitting, at the present time, to reduce either the navy, the army, or the ordnance, of the country,—we did not think it wise or becoming to have recourse to loans to supply the deficiency. If that is a principle which hon. Gentlemen opposite think ought to be sustained, I hope they will no longer hesitate in declaring their opinions. But there is another course—namely, that of adding very greatly to the direct taxation of the country, either by a new income or property tax, or by a very considerable addition to the assessed taxes. But when we came to consider this course, we had to oppose to it the alternative, whether it would not be possible, by diminishing an excess of protective duties which existed at present, to give the public additional means of purchasing, not the luxuries, but some of the prominent comforts and necessities of life, and, at the same time, to obtain an increase of revenue which should enable us to fill up the deficiency which has taken place. We came, in fact, to the opinion that this might be done; and from the moment that we had formed our deliberate opinion to this effect, it would have been wrong in us to have proposed to the House the imposition of an additional direct tax, either on property, or in the shape of an assessed tax, thus imposing additional burthens upon the whole of the people of this country whilst it was obvious that there were other ways by which the necessary income might be obtained, and, at the same time, the people at large not be oppressed, but rather relieved. This opinion, therefore, was taken up by her Majesty's Government; this course was resolved upon—a course and a principle more likely, perhaps, to lead any Government into difficulties than any other of the three alternative courses which I have already mentioned to the House; particularly

when having to meet the additional feeling of opposition which the noble Lord has embodied in the resolution which he intends this evening to propose to the House. But we could not shrink from this resolution, when once its advantage to the country was agreed upon. When my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer shows, that according to his calculations, a large additional income may be derived from timber and sugar by means perfectly legitimate, and often resorted to heretofore in the financial arrangements of the country, we could not refuse to propose that scheme to the House. And now I put it to the House, whether, when called upon to consider sugar and timber as a means of revenue, I should have affirmed, "Yes, I do so consider them; but, at the same time, I dare not touch the project on account of the great particular interests which would be affected by it." With regard to the protective duty on corn, my opinion is, that it works no advantage to the landed interests themselves, who so pertinaciously adhere to it, whilst it could be modified with advantage, not only to all the great commercial relations of this country with other nations, but also to the growers of corn in this country. Now, if holding this opinion, I were to shrink timidly from the assertion of it, I should have met the House of Commons without the same chance of support which I have in proposing what I believe to be good and right measures—measures which I believe, one day or other, will lay a new foundation for the commercial policy of this country. We could not have met the House with the same confidence as we now do, if, approving of these changes, we had been alarmed or deterred, by our fears, from proposing them. I shall say but a few words respecting those parts of the proposals of her Majesty's Government, which are not at present immediately before the House. With respect to the timber duties, I have been in correspondence with my noble Friend the present Governor of the Canadas, in the course of which I stated to him the intentions of her Majesty's Ministers on this subject, and he, as was very natural, replied, that the projected change would place him under great difficulties. There was another measure, however, which had been in discussion between my noble friend and myself before he left the country, the parti-



culars of which I need not now mention, which it was thought would be a measure of great relief and additional prosperity to the Canadas, without imposing any additional burthen upon this country; and my noble friend stated, that if he were enabled to hold out a hope of passing this measure, the Canadas would on the whole be gainers by the scheme. With regard now to the duty on corn. I have stated to the House the duty which I mean to propose—a duty framed, not as the noble Lord opposite supposes, in disregard of the principle of protection to the landed interests; but, on the contrary, such a protective duty as, considering the prices of foreign corn, and the expenses of importing it to this country and preparing it for the market, would, I think, generally keep up the standing price of corn to from 50s. to 60s. a quarter, and at the same time not expose the country to those ruinous fluctuations by which at one time importation became wholly prohibited, whilst at others, by a skilful and artificial arrangement of averages, a large importation might take place at a merely nominal duty. I come now to that question upon which a proposal is about to be made by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in Committee of Ways and Means. The first thing which I think it necessary to state upon this subject is, that the present duties on foreign sugar bring the question completely within the scope of the principle which I wish to see adopted—the principle of abolishing prohibition, and constituting fair and moderate protection in its stead. I believe that the principle of prohibition is injurious in every way to the people of this country, and generally prevents the importation of the article itself at so cheap a rate, and so good, as it could be without it. The present duty on foreign sugar is 63s. a hundred weight, which, except on very rare occasions, as for instance in the course of last year, completely excluded it from the market. So much was this the case, that at certain periods, I think, for instance, in the year 1815, when it was thought right to admit foreign sugar into the market of this country, there were special Acts of Parliament to admit it at a lower duty. I am not now arguing whether foreign sugar should or should not be admitted into this country; but the case is certainly one in which the principle of prohibition clearly

applies. The next proposition I shall state is, I think, supported by what is remarked in various petitions presented to the House this evening—namely, that the duty proposed by my right hon. Friend will give such an amount of protection to our West-India colonists as will enable them to grow their sugar with profit for our market. With a duty of 37s. per hundred weight, added to the present average price in bond of foreign sugar, which may be taken at 22s., the price would be 59s.; but allowing for the rise which would necessarily take place on the increased demand consequent on the reduction of duty, the market price could hardly be put at less than 61s. But, continued the noble Lord, this is the very price which the West-India planters themselves say they would be able to sell their sugar at; and, it may be asked, if they are able to introduce their sugars at 61s., why should it be necessary to introduce foreign sugars also at the same or a higher price? To this, I think, the answer is very plain. What the West-Indian growers have stated with regard to the amount of supplies which they may be able to produce, may be proved; but, until it is so, it is mere calculation and assertion; and if it should happen that the price of their sugars should rise to 86s. or 88s. a hundred weight, there would be no remedy against that high price. These high prices not being counteracted by any competition, would become that grievance to the people of this country, the magnitude of which could hardly be exaggerated. Now, with regard to this great principle of competition, I think that if I were to quote the instances of its beneficial operations, they would be so numerous that I should weary the House with them. But I know no reason why I should not state sufficient to apply the principle to the present case. For this purpose I will mention two instances. In 1786, the earthenware of England was admitted into France, and the result was, that in a short time the earthenware manufacture of France was greatly improved by the spirit of imitation and competition. Again, when French cloth came into England, the English, who previously produced an article of very inferior quality, imitated the produce of their neighbours, and sold the imitation as French, producing it, at length, as cheap and better than any that had before been

seen in the country. Similar and equally notorious were the results in late years of the great and laudable exertions in favour of the principle of free trade, made by that talented man, and high official authority, Mr. Huskisson. For instance, on the measure for admission of foreign silks and gloves, Parliament was told that English silks and English gloves were of so inferior a manufacture that all those engaged in that manufacture would be ruined if they had to compete with articles of foreign produce; whereas, on the contrary, a great improvement and extension had taken place in those very branches of manufacture which it was predicted would be ruined by these changes. And what will be the case with regard to sugar? The statements which are received at the office, at the head of which I have the honour to be, give the most gratifying proofs of the beneficial effects which the abolition of slavery has had in inciting the growers to increased regularity and improved methods of cultivation. As long as slavery existed, nothing could be worse, or more barbarous, than the modes of cultivation pursued in the West-India colonies. The abolition of slavery was immediately followed by improved methods and contrivances. As an instance of these improvements, I will beg to read a passage from the official reports to which I have alluded:—

“ Mr. Grant, senior stipendiary magistrate in Manchester, states a fact which contains much promise in it; a machine for peeling coffee, ‘ which will not only effect a great saving of manual labour, but will expedite the process of manufacture, perform the operation more effectively, and save the heavy and expensive buildings required for the rude and cumbersome machine now in general use,’ has been invented by a Mr. John Humble, of St. Ann’s. He has had to contend, according to Mr. Grant, with ‘ strong prejudices and ridicule, and opposition and apathy, before he could obtain a practical trial for his invention.’ I presume, therefore, that it has been tried at last, and that the result of the trial has been satisfactory, but no further particulars are given. If there is one thing which the West-India planters should desire to see more than another, it is a man making his fortune by some patent invention for the abridgment of labour.”

This is a sample of the efforts at improvement which are now making by the West-India planters, and I contend that by the admission of some competition in

the home market, by admitting the possibility of sugar and coffee from elsewhere being sold in this country, we shall be stimulating the inventions of these persons, and making them exercise that industry and that inventive energy which Englishmen have always shown themselves foremost in displaying and carrying into effect in all matters of practical utility. I have now stated the principle upon which I wish the House to act upon this subject, and to fix the duty upon foreign sugar as low as they think it could properly be admitted at; what that duty should be in amount I will not now discuss further, it being a proper subject for the House to consider when it shall have resolved itself into committee on the subject. I now come to another point, one on which I think the House should lay the greatest stress, one on which I am sure all parties attach the greatest interest. After discussing questions on which so much opposition has been manifested in this House, I am happy to dwell for a moment upon one statement which I think will be gratifying to all parties—a statement showing that the great act of emancipation which this country so nobly carried into effect at an expense of 20,000,000*l.*, has been most successful and happy in its results to the interests and happiness of 800,000 fellow-creatures. It is impossible to read without the liveliest satisfaction the official statements on this subject; from which it appears, that the negroes are many of them acquiring all the comforts of life, and proceeding to become the proprietors of small portions of land. Perhaps the House will permit me,—as the subject is one which does not often come before it in the ordinary course, and on which no direct motion is likely to be made, being a matter whose operation is going silently on, without the necessity for much legislation or active interference, to read a few of the statements which had been officially made to her Majesty’s Government by the stipendiary magistrates appointed to the West-India colonies, showing some of the results of the Emancipation Act in the respective islands in which they were employed. The first passage which I shall read to the House relating to the crops in Jamaica is rather unfavourable:—

“ Our accounts from Jamaica, as far as they relate to the sugar crops, are unfavourable. The crop of 1839 fell considerably below the average of the four years of apprenticeship,

which was itself considerably below the average of the six years preceding. The crop of 1840 appears to have been shorter still—in twelve districts out of twenty, very much shorter; and even this is not expected to be equalled by that of 1841. The exact amount of the deficiency the reports furnish no data for estimating."

In connection with this statement, however, it is gratifying to learn from the same authority, that "throughout Jamaica, it is an object of ambition with the peasantry to possess cottages and gardens of their own;" and to show the extent to which this feeling has prevailed since the year 1838, Sir C. Metcalfe, in a despatch, dated December 14, 1840, informs us, that the number of freeholders assessed as holding freeholds under forty acres was, in 1838 2,014, in 1840 7,842, being an increase of 5,854. Now, whatever deductions in regard to motives may be drawn from them, I think these statements are in themselves highly important; for, if we wish foreign nations to follow our example in the emancipation of negro slaves, it is highly important to show them, that the people to whom that great boon has been granted, are sensible of its value, and are improving in every way under its influence. In Barbadoes, according to the report of the stipendiary magistrates, the labourers are allowed the use of a cottage, and a spot of ground (about a quarter of an acre) rent free, but, in return, they are expected to work regularly for the estate.

"They work under verbal agreements from day to day; and the ordinary rate of wages is about 1s. sterling for a day of eight or nine hours; not so high as in Jamaica. Task-work is hardly anywhere resorted to. The labourers are perfectly quiet and peaceable; and though the police magistrates (who are most of them planters), do not give them a high character for industry, or regularity, or duty to their superiors, the main fault imputed to them comes, I think, to little more than this, that they have no abstract love of field labour, and no such solicitude for their master's interests as should induce them to work harder on his account than they need to do on their own. It seems, however, to be universally admitted, that they are raising their scale of comforts, and improving in their habits and tastes; and that they supply themselves with the means of satisfying their new wants, by fair working at no extravagant rate of wages."

Of Antigua we read as follows:—

"The transition from slavery to freedom, sudden as it was, settled kindly upon Antigua.

The people continued, for the most part, to reside on the estates as before, and to work for them at moderate wages; and whatever may have been said about the want of continuous labour, the broad result was, that the average sugar crop of the first five years of freedom, ending in 1838, exceeded by about one-ninth the average of the last five years of slavery, ending in 1833. Since that time there has been a gradual improvement in the general condition of the island, but no very striking change. Offences have decreased in number, marriages have become more frequent, and concubinage more disreputable; schools and friendly societies have been extended, with good effects; the dislike to field labour has been observed to be going off; and the children (who had at first been withdrawn entirely from all work on the estates) were again beginning to be employed. Imports have increased ten per cent, and it is said, that not six people in the island would have the former state of things back again if they could."

But the accounts from British Guiana are still more striking:—

"By all accounts, the change for the better is universal and rapid, and apparently without any material drawback. The worst that can be said is, that the women are working much less than they used to do; that the boys and girls, between ten and fifteen, are mostly at school, and are afterwards brought up to domestic service, or to some trade, instead of performing the light work of the estates: and that the men will not always work 'when their pockets are full.' But while they are at work, they work as well, or better, than they used to do, and they work enough to enable them not only to eat and drink what they like best, and to dress as well as their masters, but in a great many cases to purchase their acre of land, at a cost of 15*l.*, on which to erect a cottage that will cost about 50*l.* Their provision grounds are in better cultivation than they were; the imported produce consumed by them has increased largely; money circulates more extensively; new stores have risen up in great numbers; cottages and hamlets are rising in all directions on plots of land purchased for the purpose by the labourers; marriages and births are on the increase, mortality on the decline; schools and churches more numerous and better attended, the gaols almost empty, and the courts of session have scarcely anything to do. Two or three cases have occurred in which several labourers have clubbed together, and paid down large sums of money for estates, with the intention to cultivate sugar on their own account: and these enterprises appear to be regarded as promising, though the fruits have not yet had time to appear."

One of these purchases of land was to the value of 20,000*l.*, which was clubbed together for the purpose by a number of negroes. And as an instance

of the value which was attached to the free labour of these men, it was mentioned, that on frequent occasions of task-work, as much as 4s. 6d. a day was earned. I will now read another statement from a most respectable Gentleman, Mr. J. Candler, a member of the Society of Friends, the accuracy of which cannot be doubted, and the contents of which are most gratifying.

"I have examined 'M'Queen's Statistics of the British Empire,' published in 1834, in which he gives a prospective statement of what may be expected in the West-India colonies in the year 1840. He there places the number of prædial labourers as likely to work for wages at much too high, and places the wages they are likely to receive at much too low. An attentive inquiry leads me to the conclusion, that, comprising all who work, we may estimate the effective field labour done, as equal to that of one-third of the prædial population, or about 90,000 persons, working five days in the week, at 1s. 6d. sterling per day; and in this view of the case I am borne out by the opinion of Thomas M'Cornart, the custar of St. Thomas in the East, attorney to Andrew Arebdeckne, Esq., of your country, with whom I talked the matter over in his own parlour. A much larger number of people than this is actually engaged in field labour, but many are women who are not robust, children under fourteen years of age, and infirm old persons. Many do not work five days in every week, and the wages that many receive are much less than 1s. 6d. per day; but, taking all these circumstances into consideration, this computation, I am satisfied, will be found moderate and below the truth. Now, 90,000 persons working five days in the week at 1s. 6d. per day, will receive 1,755,000*l.* per annum; and if we deduct from this the rent of 67,500 prædial cottages and provision grounds, on the calculation of M'Queen, of four persons to a cottage and ground, which, at 2s. per week, would amount to 350,888*l.*, we have a surplus of 1,404,112*l.* paid annually in wages to prædial labourers alone; and if we add, on the same principle, the net wages paid to non-prædial, we shall have a total of 1,750,000*l.* paid annually to all the labourers. The provision grounds attached to the cottages furnish more than bread kind enough for all the families enumerated, giving them a surplus of provisions to be disposed of at the market towns for money, and leaving them nothing to buy but what they call salt, that is, salt fish, to season and improve their food, clothing (of which they want but little), and such luxuries as they may choose to procure. Now, I would ask, where besides, in the whole wide world, is there a peasantry that, with so little toil, has such a command over the good things of this life? These people keep poultry, which feed on the refuse of the

cocoa nut, after they have boiled it for lamp oil; they keep pigs, which feed on weed bins and garbage, and fatten during four months in the year on the fruit of the mangoe tree, which spreads itself everywhere, in hedge-rows, and in all woodlands, and yields an incredible supply of food. They keep goats, which roam where they please; and many of them keep horses, asses, and mules, which they tether at home, or suffer to trespass on the open pasture. Under slavery all the people, except young children and the sick and infirm, were compelled to labour. On the calculation here made, only one-third of the population is considered to be thus employed, leaving children at liberty to go to school, mothers at liberty to tend their infants, and ample time, independent of the Sabbath, for recreation and rest to all classes. The people of Jamaica prove this statement to be correct by the manner in which they now live; they do not work very hard, they live well; they dress handsomely, they send their children to school, they attend a public worship, after walking and riding six, eight, and ten miles to do so; they build chapels at their own expense, support entirely many of the missionaries, and do works of mercy in sustaining their sick relatives and friends. Slavery, indeed, has left a taint which will require at least a generation to purge away. Much darkness, superstition, and heathenish immorality remain; but the change for the better is fast going on. We have every thing greatly to encourage us, both in the civil and religious condition of the people."

Such is the gratifying account which we have of the state of things in Jamaica at the present moment. The accounts which we receive from the governors and others in other colonies are equally satisfactory and encouraging. With regard to the argument which is to be deduced from these statements, I would beg the House to consider whether they think that the happy condition of the Negro population depends upon a very high and excessive price being given for free labour. Upon this point I have asked those who have complained of a short amount of labour why they did not give higher wages; and to this question the answer was given that increased wages would not hold out an inducement to regular labour, but only to occasional exertion, in order to obtain the means of enjoyment during an interval of idleness: and this fact was used as an argument for the necessity of immigration. If, then, the duty on foreign sugar be reduced below 63s., is there any reason to suppose that the people of Jamaica would not continue to labour, and to be as well off as any population on the face

of the globe? Upon this point I must say that, rejoiced as I am, and as all must be, at the termination of the existence of slavery in the West-Indies, I do not think it incumbent upon us to force the production of sugar there, which is not necessary for the people of Jamaica, whilst the article, itself is very necessary to the comfort of the people of this country. Having done all that we could in the generosity of our nature for the people of that country—having granted them their freedom, and given them a good and wholesome administration of justice, together with other advantages of the like kind, I do not think that we should be justified in giving our attention exclusively to their interests, and in endeavouring, by a mistaken policy, to force the cultivation of sugar in the West-Indies, whilst the people of this country were suffering from want of the common comforts and necessities of life. I have told you of the extreme comfort enjoyed by the people of Jamaica, and the happy prospects in other West-India islands; and I will now give you a statement of another kind, that of a gentleman of good authority, relating to the state of the labouring population in Bolton:—

"In the cotton mills alone, about 95,000*l.* less have been paid during the last twelve months. Many of the mills have been entirely stopped for all or part of the time, and with only two exceptions, all have worked short time for a considerable portion of the past year. I have made a very careful calculation from extensive personal inquiry, and assert most confidently that, altogether, there must have been at least 130,000*l.* less paid in wages in the Bolton Union. Now, add this 130,000*l.* less in wages to the 195,000*l.* more for food, and there is a total loss to Bolton of 325,000*l.* What are the consequences? There are now in Bolton 1,125 houses untenanted, of which about fifty are shops, some of them in the principal streets.—Here is a loss to the owners of 10,000*l.* to 12,000*l.* a-year. The shopkeepers are almost ruined by diminished returns and bad debts. There were, a short time ago, three sales of the effects of shopkeepers in one day. Distraints for cottage rents occur daily. The arrears of cottage rents, and the debts to shopkeepers, are incalculable, but they amount to many thousand pounds. The pawnbrokers' shops are stowed full of the clothing, furniture, and even bedding of the destitute poor.—Fever is also prevalent. Mr. R. S. Kay, one of the medical officers of the union, and a young practitioner of great promise, lately took the infection of malignant typhus fever, and last week fell a victim to his harassing duties.

This gentleman had latterly worked almost day and night. A short time ago 500 persons were relieved by the Poor-law guardians in one day, in amounts varying from six to eighteenpence per head per week. In many cases two or three families are crowded into one house. In one case, seventeen persons were found in a dwelling about five yards square. In another, eight persons, two pair of looms, and two beds, in a cellar six feet under ground, and measuring four yards by five. There are scores of families with little or no bedding, having literally eaten it, *i. e.* pawned or sold it for food. The out door relief to the poor is three times greater in amount than on the average of the three years ending 1838. South of Bolton, four miles, a large spinning establishment, giving employment to 800 and subsistence to 1,300 persons, has been entirely stopped for nine months. The proprietor has upwards of 100 cottages empty or paying no rent, and, although possessed of immense capital, finds himself unable to continue working his mills to advantage. Entering Bolton from Manchester, another mill, requiring 180 hands, has been entirely standing for eighteen months. In the centre of the town, another, 250 hands, stopped several weeks. North of Bolton, one mile, a spinning, manufacturing, and bleaching establishment, on which 1,200 persons were dependent for subsistence, has been entirely standing for four months. Several machine makers and engineers are now employing one or two hundred hands less than usual, at wages varying from 15*s.* to 40*s.* a week. A public subscription, amounting to nearly 2,000*l.* has just been raised to mitigate, in some degree, the sufferings of the destitute poor; in fact, to deal out a scanty pittance, just sufficient to keep them from actual starvation, to a body of workmen who possess, perhaps, greater skill and industry than any population of similar numbers on the face of the globe, but who are forbid, by the inhuman policy of our landowners, to exchange the produce of their labour for food in the open market of the world."

There are other similar accounts from Manchester and other manufacturing towns, from which it appears that generally work is falling off, and the people with difficulty obtain wages sufficient to support life, and that bad as the present state of things is, there are still apprehensions that they may get much worse. I ask you, then, as the representatives of this country, with all your humane views in regard to the West Indies, not to be so misled as to force the people of this country to refuse themselves the use of some of the most essential articles of the most moderate and temperate diet, whilst the people of Jamaica—for whom you would call upon them to make this sacrifice—are a people with

whom the unfortunate people of Bolton and Manchester would gladly and willingly change places. We are, in fact, as I consider, in a very great crisis in respect to our manufactures. Whether it be owing to the increase of manufacturing enterprise in Germany, Switzerland, and France—whether it be owing to a disposition on the part of the United States of America to impose still further restrictions upon the admission of our manufactures—whether it be that the manufactures of this country have already been carried to such an extent, that unless new markets be opened for its produce it cannot be sustained on the footing it has acquired—whether be it from one of these circumstances, or from all combined, the fact is still, I fear, undeniable, that there is very great danger—that a considerable portion of the working population of this country, so far from being able to enjoy, not the luxuries, but the ordinary necessities and comforts of life, will be obliged to resort to the relief given to the poor as paupers before the close of the present year. And I ask the House whether at such a time as this, it will refuse to the people of this country, so circumstanced, that legitimate means of relief which a wise modification of fiscal imposts would be calculated to afford them. I have often witnessed with pain that too many working men are induced, for the temporary gratification of their appetites, to spend a large portion of their wages on intoxicating liquors. But I am glad to say, that this is not now the charge which I can bring against the working population of this country, whose unfortunate condition I now refer to. I find that, instead of spirituous and intoxicating liquors, these men now in great part resort to tea, coffee, and sugar, as a means of obtaining some little comfort, and of invigorating their frames for the toils of the day. I say, that this is a disposition which should be encouraged. Is the poor man to go into the grocer's shop (a case which I have heard occurred last year,) and, after hearing the price of sugar, turn away in sorrow and despondence because the article is placed beyond his reach? That has been the case under your present law—that has been the effect under your present duty. You may tell me of your expectations; that you have a promise of reduction from merchants, associations, and colonial clubs; but supposing these promises fail, and that

Parliament, on the faith of them, have not changed the duties, why, in the course of the next autumn, your labouring people will be suffering the same privations from the want of this necessary of life as they are now. But we are told, that though there may not be a sufficient supply from the West-Indies, yet that in the East-Indies that deficiency would be supplied, and that a great capital would be sent from England for the purpose of raising it. It is very possible, that your financial laws and restrictions may so order it, that in the course of years the sugar planter in the West Indies may find himself defeated, not by the competition of the foreigner at thirty shillings the hundred weight duty, but by the competition of the East-India proprietor at twenty-four shillings duty, and with a freight very little above the charge which the West-India planter has to bear. That you may find to be the case, but you will then have created a new and more formidable monopoly—not one upheld by a certain number of planters, not existing in such a place as the West Indies, with which Parliament is perfectly competent and formidable enough to deal, but a monopoly backed by a formidable government—backed, not only by those interested in East-India Sugar, but by all who take a part in the Government of the East-Indies. Then, again, will arise other questions: supposing the production of East-India Sugar should entirely extinguish the monopoly of the East—not entirely new, but of a most difficult kind—questions which I never hear without some apprehensions for the result of your interference. You would have the question of how to deal with a population receiving three-half-pence a day, and which, when transferred to Demerara, you have been compelled to force to labour by corporal punishment: you will have the question how far it is proper to interfere, not with such a simple system of slavery as was established in the West Indies, but with the whole of the relations and complicated state of society in the East Indies; and you will finally have the question how far you are justified in giving an advantage to the East Indies as against the free labourers of the West. Therefore I should fear that no legislation could be adopted which would rest on a stable and permanent foundation if the East Indies, and the East Indies alone, were to furnish the

whole supply to this country. Now, then, the noble Lord (Viscount Sandon) has proposed a resolution stating his objections to the particular measure of the government in very guarded terms. He does not say directly—he does not wish the House to say—that this country should never admit foreign Sugar. He does not choose to say, that slave-labour Sugar should be prohibited and never come into the market with free-labour Sugar, but he says, very cautiously, “This House is not prepared (especially with the present prospects of the supply of Sugar from the British Possessions).” Now, I can well understand—though I think it a most mistaken feeling—that a man, having such a scruple of conscience—such a horror of slavery and of slave-grown articles, as not to consent to consume them—should not give his vote that these should be admitted for consumption. I can imagine such a man, saying, “Be the hated traffic prohibited for ever, and whatever the price, I will have free-grown Sugar; but free-grown Sugar it must be, or I will not consume it.” But the noble Lord says no such thing. He says that, with the present prospects of supply, “this House is not prepared”—to do what?—“to adopt the measure proposed by her Majesty’s Government.” I understand that, as a great party move perfectly well. It leaves the noble Lord (Viscount Sandon) quite at liberty to say, hereafter, the increased supply we calculated upon is not forthcoming; the hopes entertained by our friends were, we admit, over sanguine; Lord Harewood and others of our supporters were mistaken in their views, and we now submit a measure, not the same as that introduced by her Majesty’s former Government—that’s gone by; we defeated the motion that question, but we feel compelled now to bring forward a proposition which will admit slave-grown sugar.” There is not a word in the resolution of the 7th of May, 1841, which provides for adopting a new measure, should the other prospects which it alludes to, of a more favourable nature, be secured. I say the noble Lord, with his views, was right in moving the resolution in its present shape; but if it meant to embrace the sentiments of those who protest against slave-grown sugar, it should have been totally different. If you mean to raise a question as to the amount of protection, your course is clear, when my

right hon. Friend (The Chancellor of the Exchequer) moves his resolutions in a committee of the whole House; but this resolution seems to forbid entertaining the question of introducing foreign sugar, and does not forbid it. This resolution looks as if it were full of humanity, and yet has a corner left open for the introduction of free trade principles. In fact, Sir, this resolution is totally unfit to be proposed before you leave the chair, and ought not to be adopted. With regard to the former part of the resolution, it is stated,—

“That considering the efforts and sacrifices which Parliament and the country have made for the abolition of the slave trade and slavery, with the earnest hope that their exertions and example might lead to the mitigation and final extinction of those evils in other countries, this House is prepared, &c.”

What do those words mean? Is it intended to convey by them that whatever may become of the commerce of the country, you are prepared to refuse admission to all slave-grown sugar? If that is the case, what do you say to various other articles now imported into this country? I shall leave out of the question cotton and other articles, on the ground that they do not compete with products supplied by free labour of our own. This may be considered some ground for their exclusion, though I do not consider it a sufficient one, when the question is based on moral and national considerations. The question, as the petitioners from Bath state, should be considered not merely as one of commerce, but in a national point of view, and turns upon the practicability of abolishing slavery in every part of the globe. But there are articles which you admit the produce of slave labour, though similar ones are supplied by free labour. There is one remarkable instance arising certainly from an evasion of the law, and which was brought to light by the import committee which has been so often mentioned of late. I allude to the importation of Brazilian coffee by the Cape of Good Hope. I have taken the following return from the statistical volume lately presented to the House:—

Now, what is the history of this? This coffee is the produce of slave labour, though imported by the Cape of Good Hope. Does the noble Lord (Sandon) propose to levy, for the future, 15*s.* a lb.



on this coffee? Does he think, that the persons consuming this coffee will be willing to pay it? Or, can he imagine, that those who would not receive slave-grown coffee will look upon it as perfectly harmless when filtered by a voyage to the Cape of Good Hope? Well, then, you have slave-grown coffee coming into this country, and if you intend to prohibit it, you can impose the high duty I have mentioned above, and you will then have the satisfaction of reflecting, that you have raised the price of coffee as well as of sugar. But if you adhere to your present resolution, you will fall far short of the demands of what you are pleased to call an enlightened humanity. Where is the philanthropist who will tell me "I have a cup of good slave-grown coffee, and by putting a lump of free labour sugar into it I shall make the potation quite innoxious—and any person, whatever may be his regard for the negro, and however much he may prefer the interests of a man with a black skin to one with a white, will be exposed to no reproach—no remorse of conscience—if he qualifies his beverage by the addition I have mentioned." There is another instance of your acting contrary to your

professed principles, in the case of sugar. You are great refiners of sugar in this country. Men of great capital are engaged in that trade, and you carry it on for the purpose of exportation to foreign countries. How do you justify that? If it is wrong to deal with countries where slave sugar is manufactured, how can you defend your conduct in acting as it were as "a go-between" with foreign countries? But there is a still stronger case; for it appears in evidence, that the planters of the West Indies, wishing to obtain advantage of the low duty of this country, do advisedly send slave-grown sugar, when refined, from this country to the West Indies. But you (the Opposition) will stop that and twenty other things of the same kind. Let the noble Viscount (Viscount Sandon) stop likewise the importation of coffee from the Brazils by the Cape of Good Hope; let him stop all communication with slave colonies; let him interrupt and vex our commerce; yet I defy him, keeping the character of this nation as a commercial country in view with common humanity to the artisan of this country, to carry into effect a total non-intercourse with the slave-growing countries. Well, then, I come to the conclusion which one can hardly help arriving at, that this resolution, well as it sounds—philanthropic as it may appear, is in effect, good for nothing; but, as it serves a party movement, and tends to no other purpose than to embarrass the financial plan of the year, by collecting together, in opposition to it, all those who have an interest in the productions of the West Indies, and who would fain have something as like a monopoly as they can, and those who entertain a feeling, which does them the highest credit, and which must always be looked on with the greatest respect, of abhorrence to slavery. But if we consider the question as a party question, I am obliged to put another to the House—where is the party which has been ever anxious and foremost in assisting the abolitionist cause. I have been looking to records of speeches—not of those made in our day, and for the purpose of reproaching hon. Gentlemen opposed to me—and I find in them Colonel Tarleton, giving the number of ships and men employed by the port of Liverpool, in carrying on the Slave-trade on the coast of Africa and the West Indies. The opposition was so great from Liverpool and other places, and the opposition in this

COFFEE.	IMPORTED.	HOME CONSUMPTION.	
		1838.	1839.
British Possessions . . . Foreign from within limits of Company's charter . . . . .	1838.	<i>lbs.</i> 22,506,000	<i>lbs.</i> 22,539,000
	1839.	<i>lbs.</i> 15,729,000	<i>lbs.</i> 18,041,000
		3,343,000	8,607,000
		20,802,000	26,708,000

House was so overwhelming, that Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding his eloquent speeches in the cause, found himself deserted, like other Tory leaders, when he exceeded the liberality of his colleagues; and the Slave-trade continued until the Whigs, in 1806, put an end to the abhorred and horrible traffic. With regard to slavery, also, though attempts were made by Tory governments to mitigate the most revolting features, such as the corporal punishment of women, and other improvements which were never carried practically into effect, it was not until another Government was called to power, that slavery was finally abolished, and that the noble Lord (Lord Stanley) who now sits opposite, as the organ of Earl Grey's Government, proposed a grant from this House, in order to get rid of that stain on our country and our commerce. If we have made these efforts with effect, and found an absence of any really practical plans for securing so noble an object on the part of our opponents—when I see a resolution of this kind, I am tempted to say to those who never did anything effectually for the abolition of the Slave-trade, or of slavery, “you now come forward for a party purpose with an affectation of humanity to which your past conduct does not give you a just title.” Sir, I believe I have stated the reasons why, on general grounds, the proposition of my right hon. Friend should be supported, and why the resolution of the noble Lord should be rejected. There are various other questions which would remain even if the House went into committee on the subject. With regard to the protecting duty we propose, that is a matter of detail open to discussion in committee. With regard to other propositions made and supported by plausible reasons, such as that for the reduction of the duties on colonial sugar, I should say, as my own opinion, that while I do not think that the revenue would benefit to the extent stated by my right hon. Friend the other night by a reduction of the duties, yet these are the articles with regard to which all must look forward with anxiety to the time when such a reduction may be effected. There is no article connected with the comfort and welfare of the people on which it is more advisable to effect a reduction of duty than this; and though the revenue may for a time suffer by such a change, it would be speedily reimbursed by the increased con-

sumption. There are other questions, particularly that arising from our relation with the Brazils. Supposing we were able to reduce the duty on our colonial sugar, we should then have an opportunity of knowing whether the Brazilian Government was disposed to renew their commercial treaties, and on what terms, and we should besides be in a position to point out to them the risk which that government and every other government must run which has a large proportion of its subjects retained in obedience solely by coercion; we should be able to show them not only the moral mischiefs and the guilt of slavery, but how, under a different course, their commercial and agricultural prosperity might be secured, and their relations to this country be rendered amicable and permanent. But if you adopt the resolution of the noble Lord, and at once announce your determination to reject all slave-grown sugar, what will the Brazilians—who may not criticise the resolution so nicely as I have done, do? Will they give up slavery? Will they renounce piracy? Will they not sell their sugar? Ay, sell it they will, and sell it they can; but they will sell it to other nations. Merchants who deal with the Brazils tell you that many articles will go there from Germany, and printed goods from Switzerland, in exchange for sugar produced by slave labour, which will not be in the least diminished. In fact, the only advantage gained, would be, that the commerce now carried on with us would be transferred to other nations. And what is all that you can effect? You do not change the Brazilians into free labourers, but you send their sugar and coffee, the products of slave labour, to be consumed by other countries. I cannot see that anything would be gained to the world, or that the negro slave in Brazil would be much comforted if he were told—“the sugar you are working is not to go into the mouth of the English shopkeeper or artisan; you shall work and be flogged to death that Germany and Switzerland may enjoy the products of your labour.” I own, as I stated at the commencement of what I addressed to the House, that I do think that this question may in a different point of view from the noble Lord's be of great interest, not to the Brazils and the United States, but that with regard to the continent of Europe, the example you are now giving would be of the utmost

importance. If they see that this great commercial country, this free country, which has long entertained such questions, has come to the decision that restriction and prohibition are the best maxims of commercial policy, they will quote that example for their own guidance; their manufacturers will quote it for their own regulations, and those of the people under them; and restriction and prohibition will thus become the rule of all the intercourse of the world. Now, is that for your advantage—is it for the advantage of the world? I say, for your advantage it certainly is not; for, as a great commercial and manufacturing nation, your plain policy is to promote the extension and diffusion of commerce and manufactures. No more is it for the advantage of the world; because my belief is, that the more free and unrestricted is intercourse, the more the nations of the world are mingled together by the ties of peaceful commerce, the further you carry your bales of goods and cases of hardware, the more widely will you diffuse that general knowledge and maxims of civilization and Christianity which belong to a nation which stand in the front rank for these qualities. You must observe that, though you now stand in so proud and eminent a rank in this respect, you are liable to those vicissitudes which may alter your position. You do not stand like Rome—

*"Rome, it is thine alone, with awful sway,  
To rule mankind, and make the world obey,  
Disposing peace and war thy own majestic way."*

We are, on the contrary, among several nations of great power, of great civilization, with institutions, some of them as free as our own, many of them having advanced to great wealth, and competing with and rivalling you in the arts of peace and the productions of commerce. Give them a right example, and you will still stand, not only their equal, but the foremost amongst them. Take a contrary course, and say this is the day on which you have resolved on restriction and prohibition; tell them your merchants of the East and West Indies, your timber merchants of North America, and the landowners of your own soil have raised monopoly as the standard under which they mean to march, and by which they will abide, and you will rapidly spread your example; and when you may wish to retrace your steps, you will find the lesson you

have taught too well appreciated ever to be forgotten. Having these views of the state of this country,—having these views of the state of our colonies and of the other countries of Europe,—it was our bounden duty to state them to Parliament. And as they formed the subject of our advice to our Sovereign, we felt bound to produce the results of that advice to the House, and to let this House determine thereupon. If you should adopt the plan which we propose, we look confidently forward to the increased prosperity of the country. If you do not take that course, on this House be the responsibility of rejecting our measures. We have discharged the only duty incumbent on us,—that of not having concealed our opinions, and done our best for the service of our country.

Viscount *Sandon* rose to move the amendment of which he had given notice. He said it was not in his power, nor did he feel it his duty, to follow the noble Lord into all the various topics which he had thought proper to bring before the House. Indeed he had been for some days labouring under indisposition, and on that ground must beg the House would excuse an imperfect discharge of the duty, which he had undertaken. But under any circumstance he should not have felt it necessary to enter into the wide field of discussion which the noble Lord had thought proper to traverse. He would not be led from the proper subject of that evening's debate, from which the noble Lord found it more convenient to escape, as soon as he could, to other and more exciting topics. He could not but observe on the novelty of the present proceeding. The Chancellor of the Exchequer came down with a distinct proposition, and when a notice of an amendment upon that proposition was given, another Member of the Government, in anticipation of defeat, gave notice beforehand of another amendment; an amendment which could only be put to the House, in case the proposition of the Government was rejected. In general, it was not the practice of those who expected to win the battle, to secure for themselves, at least so ostentatiously, a way of retreat. For his part he should confine himself to the distinct proposition before the House, the proposition, on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had called on them to express an opinion, viz., a reduction of duty on foreign sugar, and would not enter into the question of that more general proposition which was involved in the amend-

ment of the noble Lord, and which would, he had no doubt, by the defeat of the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, find place for a separate discussion. The noble Lord had dealt in a great deal of declamation which was beside the subject, without touching the main question at issue. The question was simply this, whether the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would or would not give a fresh stimulus to the Slave-trade, and whether there was any overweening consideration in the present condition of the supply of sugar to this country, which should compel us to have recourse to so lamentable a conclusion of all our efforts in the cause of abolition. He had never assumed the position, and indeed he knew no one else who had assumed the position, which the noble Lord had taken so much pains to ridicule and refute, that this country was bound to consume nothing but what was provided by free labour. He had never heard the warmest abolitionist profess it; it would be impossible to carry it out, and it was not necessary for, or in any way involved in his proposition. But this he thought, he had a right to ask, that we should not without the shadow of necessity for the interest of our own population, give a fresh stimulus to that execrable traffic, which we had incurred, and were incurring such heavy sacrifices to put down; and that to the detriment of an experiment on free labour in the cultivation of sugar in our own possessions, from the success of which we hope for the most beneficial effects to the whole negro race. This question he had a right to have answered—where was the necessity, where was the prospect of starvation prices with regard to sugar, which should compel her Majesty's Government thus to come forward and throw overboard the arguments they had used last year in resisting this very proposition when made by the Member for Wigan, and to sacrifice at once the noble fruits, which we hoped to reap from all our sacrifices, in the imitation by foreign nations of our successful example? Let the noble Lord look at the prices of sugar a few months back, and at those which now prevailed, and he would see what ground for apprehending high and burdensome prices now existed. He had treated with great levity the statements which had been made upon this point, because forsooth they were made by mercantile Associations; and had talked with great scorn of all such Associations, and had assumed to himself the position of one who stood up on behalf of

that body of the community which was protected by no Association. Surely when he took this tone, he forgot the great Anti-corn-law league, with all its emissaries and all its engines, whose doctrines he was propagating, and whose language he was assuming. But it did seem fitting, that they should really know whether the assumed prospect of starvation, in regard to sugar, was borne out by the fact. He knew that it must be tedious to listen to statements which he had no doubt Hon. Members had, in one way or another, already been made acquainted with, but it was necessary in this case that they should be repeated. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would not dispute that there were 35,000 tons of sugar in hand at the beginning of the year. He would hardly dispute, that 5,000 tons might be expected from the West Indies beyond the quantity which they supplied last year; this would furnish 115,000 tons. Mauritius had already shipped 20,000 tons, and 20,000 more were known to be ready for shipment. Above 50,000 tons have already reached this country from the East-Indies and the remainder will not make up less than 70,000 tons from that quarter. Thus, there was, he might say, a certainty that between the 1st of January and the 31st of December of this year 260,000 tons of sugar will have reached this country, being 60,000 tons more than this country had ever consumed in any one year. Supposing that there was, which he did not believe, any exaggeration in this calculation, still, making every possible allowance, was not there afforded perfect security for an ample supply of sugar for the consumption of the country, and that at moderate and reasonable prices? And was this a state of things so discouraging, as to induce them to give up at once all chance of the success of their great experiment on the cultivation of sugar by free negro labour in their own colonies? Would the noble Lord, or the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, or would the Chancellor of the Exchequer tell us that what they were about to do was to be no encouragement to the slave-importing and slave-employing countries? Why, it was their own argument last year that it would. But moreover he had thought, that they were about to offer it as a boon to the Brazils, and as a temptation to that country to renew the commercial treaty with that country, which was about to expire. Did they mean that it should be a boon, or did they not? If they did not, they were de-

luding the Brasilians and the merchants who traded with Brazil, to whom they held it out as a boon; and if they did, whatever the amount of that boon was, it must be, whatever might be the intentions of her Majesty's Ministers, by so much to the advantage of the slave-importing part of the world, and to the disadvantage of our free possessions.—The noble Lord seemed now to treat it as a matter of slight importance that those colonies should grow a staple commodity at all, and to think it was of no consequence, so that we got sugar, and the negroes were at their ease, whether or not the sugar was the produce of the free labour of the West Indies. Such, at least, was not the opinion of Mr. Gurney, one of the most eminent amongst those who had promoted the great experiment of emancipation. In his interesting letters from the West Indies, he tells us, how he had impressed upon the negroes in Jamaica the importance, for the happiness of their brethren in other countries, that by assiduous cultivation of their great exportable staple,—sugar, they should show to the world, that an emancipated colony might still be a rich and a profitable possession; and he tells us how sensible they seemed to this appeal. He knew that if we were unable to show to France, to Spain, to the United States, that emancipation and a continued cultivation of the staple products, that freedom and prosperity, were compatible, our example and our efforts would not only be lost upon them, but that they would only serve as a beacon to warn others from following in the same course; that we should have rivetted the chains which we wished to strike off. Now, these were the grounds on which he (Lord Sandon) rested his opposition to the proposition of the Government, and he could see no reason in the circumstance of a few months of high prices, which had already gone by, and which he had shown could not return, for taking the course which had been adopted by the Government. It grieved him to see the noble Lord come forward to disturb the picture of prosperity and success which he himself had been depicting as existing in the West Indies, and which, if continued, afforded the best and most promising hopes as to the future destinies of the negro population in every part of the world. As a pure mercantile question between a colonial and foreign article, the protection that was at present afforded to the West-India colonies, he admitted fully, was greater than it need be; he would admit at once

that it was so; but this question was one, which, under existing circumstances, stood by itself—it was a question which they had set apart as connected with a great experimental measure from which they still hoped success, on the successful issue of which the eyes of America, in particular, as well as of the rest of the world, were fixed, and which peculiarly affected the future interests and destinies of the negro in every part of the globe. On the ground, then, of a little pressure which they had felt, and which had been caused by circumstances, of the recurrence of which there was but little chance, he, at least, was not disposed to consent to their stultifying themselves in the eyes of the world, and abandoning the course in which they had embarked. He might be told that they would not be doing so: but these were the very expressions used before a committee of this House last year by a gentleman, who held a high station in the commercial world, and one who had recently suffered a defeat in an endeavour to enter Parliament in support of the present Government, Mr. Larpent. That gentleman, in recommending the admission of the productions of the East Indies, rested his recommendation, among other grounds, on this; that otherwise there was danger that prices should rise, and a clamour should be raised for the introduction of sugar from Brazil and Cuba, which he said "would stultify all your proceedings in favour of the abolition of the Slave-trade."

But it was not only the actual effect upon prices, resulting from the admission of foreign sugars at the duty proposed by the Government, which was to be considered. The moral effect of the proposition upon the minds of the cultivators of our own free sugar must be taken into consideration, when estimating its consequences, and the moral effect upon their minds would be, to convey the conviction that with that House cheapness was all in all, and that it would be prepared hereafter to abandon altogether all protection to the interests of free labour, for the sake of making sugar a little cheaper. Why was it, let him ask the noble Lord, that he could see nothing but hypocrisy in this motion? Was it not one, the ground of which was simple and intelligible, and plainly avowed; and which, as it was the very ground occupied by the noble Lord himself last year, he supposed he might presume, might be sincerely and honestly maintained? What

right had the noble Lord to deny to him (Lord Sandon), and those who supported his amendment, the same regard for the interests of humanity which had actuated the government of the noble Lord last year in resisting the proposition, which they now brought forward? But was this feeling confined to those who oppose her Majesty's Government? Was it a mere factious feeling? It was that which was common, at least, to the Anti-Slavery Society, who had expressed the same opposition to the course of her Majesty's Government; this Society, consisting of persons who have no personal or political interest in opposing the proposition, and most of whom were supporters of her Majesty's Government, but who, overlooking all party considerations, had come forward to express the same feeling which was imbodyed in his (Lord Sandon's) amendment. But the question brought before the House as the plan of her Majesty's Government with regard to sugar, was presented in the shape of a measure of finance; and if it had been one of finance alone, they (the Conservatives) would not have interposed to prevent the full consideration of it in committee in the usual course. But because he conceived it to be not a mere question of finance—and because he felt that they would not be justified, merely in consequence of circumstances such as had temporarily existed, in throwing aside their own great experiment with regard to the abolition of slavery in their colonies that they had felt themselves called upon to interpose, and oppose even the consideration of it in Committee. But looking at it merely as an acquisition of finance, he did not see, how the Chancellor of the Exchequer was, by means of the proposition he had laid before the House, to make up his budget. He intended to raise 700,000*l.* more in the present year than the last, by means of an alteration in the duty on sugar. Last year 180,000 tons of sugar were consumed, and to get his 700,000*l.* additional, he must expect an increased consumption of nearly 20,000 tons of foreign, or nearly 30,000 tons of British sugar, the one paying 37*s.* 6*d.* the other 25*s.* per cwt. and for so large an expected increase of consumption, so much beyond all example, he saw no reason in any fall of prices, such as would be the consequence of the proposed change of duty. How was this revenue to be secured? He was now speaking as if only one rate of duty on foreign sugar had been pro-

posed; and this, until this morning, was the case. One rate had been contemplated for the rich sugars of Cuba, and the poorer sugars of Brazil; the result of which would have been, that this boasted boon to the Brazils would have been monopolized by Cuba, to the higher saccharine qualities of which, both British and Brazilian sugars must have given way. In the interval, however, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had discovered his mistake, and he had endeavoured to remedy it by imposing an additional duty of 6*s.* on the fine white Cuba sugars. But even this will not help him; it would neither maintain his financial calculations, nor enable the British and Brazilian sugars to maintain the competition, for the differential duty which he proposes, being far below the real difference in the saccharine qualities, or amount of sugar contained in the cwt., the real duty on the Cuba sugar, as proposed, would be little more than that on British sugar, value for value, and much less than that on Brazilian sugar; and no moderate consumption, therefore, of this apparently higher taxed sugar would go far to swell the revenue to the required amount. To shew that he had not over-estimated this difference in the qualities of Cuba and Brazilian sugar, he would refer to a statement of the prices for the last month at Hamburgh, where there was no duty, but which was a free port, of the Havannah sugars and the Brazilian. He found there that the white Havannah sugars ranged from 27*s.* 7*d.* to 38*s.* 5*d.*; the Brazilian (Rio) white from 21*s.* 1*d.* to 25*s.* 11*d.* The difference between the best qualities of each thus appears to be between 12*s.* 6*d.*, between the worst 6*s.* 6*d.* between the best and the worst, 17*s.* 5*d.* The Brazilian and Bahia ranged from 22*s.* 2*d.* to 28*s.* 1*d.*, the difference of the best qualities being thus, 10*s.* 4*d.* of the worst 5*s.* 5*d.*; difference between the best and worst 16*s.* 3*d.* These then were the prices and relative values in the Hamburgh market, and this must be taken as a fair estimate of the relative saccharine qualities, and would show the erroneous calculations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer even in their corrected shape. He was aware, that there must always be some uncertainty in any estimate of the effect of these changes of duty; and if we had a surplus, instead of a deficiency, to deal with, it might be indifferent whether we exactly made up the estimated result; but Gentlemen should recollect, that here we had a positive deficiency to deal with, which the Chancellor of the Exchequer en-

gaged to fill up; and he (Lord S.) thought he had shown, that the result was, to say the least, doubtful, even as a measure of finance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might increase the consumption of Cuba sugar, but he could not increase much the consumption of Brazilian sugar; because before Brazilian sugar could come into the home market, the whole of the West and East India sugar must be consumed, and of this there was now every prospect of having at least 60,000 tons more than the whole consumption of the year would require. The right hon. Gentleman, he supposed, hoped that a diminution in prices arising from his measure would increase consumption, but according to the calculations of the noble Lord himself, what was the extent of the reduction expected to be gained from the Government proposition? Why, 1s. 6d. the cwt.; and it was for this diminution they were called upon to adopt a step which would have the effect of shaking every interest connected with the West and East India colonies. Reducing, then, the price of sugar by 1s. 6d. per cwt., was the remedy by which the miseries of the people of this country, miseries which the noble Lord had so feelingly described, were to be alleviated; but the noble Lord had no right to attempt to rouse the passions of the country or the interest of this House by the miseries of the handloom weavers and other operatives in the manufacturing districts, unless he was prepared to connect those miseries with the price of sugar, and to show that reducing the price by 1s. 6d. a cwt. would be a remedy for the evils which he detailed. It was trifling with them, and unworthy of the noble Lord, to pretend that any such reduction could add much to either the comfort or happiness of the suffering population of this country, and if it could, before long the influx of free-labour sugar from our own colonies would bring the price of that article down to within a trifle of what the noble Lord desired, and his object would be attained without the mischiefs which could not be denied to belong to the present proposition. It was rather hard that a Gentleman, who had given notice of a proposition, should have his speech anticipated in the way his had been by the noble Lord, and it was still more unfair on the part of the noble Lord to imagine for him (Lord Sandon) topics on which he never intended to touch. The course pursued by the noble Lord obliged him to treat the subject in a more desultory

manner than he could wish, but he trusted the House would excuse him. Let them consider the question in a commercial point of view. We were told of the vast interests at stake in the commerce with Brazil, and he did not deny their importance. But what were the commercial interests at stake on the other side? What were the exports of British manufactures to the East and West Indies? Had not they been progressively on the increase since emancipation in the one case, and encouragement to the growth of sugar in the other? East-India sugar was placed on an equal footing with the produce of the West Indies in 1836, and what was the result? Why, that the real and declared value of British manufactured goods exported to the East Indies was—

In 1837	.	.	.	£3,612,735
1838	.	.	.	3,876,196
1839	.	.	.	4,748,607

Not having the returns of the last year, he could not state exactly what the value of the exports were; but he knew that the real and declared value of the exports to the East Indies from Liverpool alone last year was 4,366,344*l.*, or within a trifle of the amount of the whole of the exports to that country during the year preceding. Now, this progressive improvement in our exports in this quarter since the equalization of the sugar duties, proved sufficiently the importance to our manufacturers of having so good a remittance from India, in exchange, as sugar. What was the state of our intercourse with the West Indies during the same period? The amount of the real and declared value of our exports to the West Indies was—

In 1837	.	.	.	£3,456,745
1838	.	.	.	3,393,441
1839	.	.	.	3,986,598

or almost 4,000,000*l.* Our trade with our emancipated West-India colonies had been increased, and this was owing principally, he believed, to the change which had taken place in the condition of the negro population, and went far to prove the advantage of dealing with freemen instead of slaves. While slavery existed, the negro population were supplied only with the commonest and poorest description of goods, but, now that they were free and obtained high wages, they exercised their own fancies with regard to articles of dress, and what was the result? Why, that the demand for better descriptions of British manufactured goods applicable to the purposes

of dress had greatly increased. In this way the operations of the manufacturers of this country were extended more widely and employment increased, and yet this was the trade the stability of which her Majesty's Government proposed to shake. The export trade with the East and the West Indies in 1839 in point of value was worth little less than 9,000,000*l.*; and in 1840 undoubtedly much more. No doubt the export trade with the Brazils was also valuable and deserved encouragement; but was it to be compared with the export trade of the East and West Indies? The whole value of the export trade with the Brazils in 1839 was given in the official tables at 2,650,000*l.*, and to that might be added about 400,000*l.* for Cuba. A friend of his connected with the Brazils, told him, indeed, that the value as given by the official returns was much underrated, and he showed him good grounds for believing that it was: but even admitting this, would not the same observation be applicable to the returns of the value of the export trade to the West or East Indies? As a standard of comparative value between the exports to the different countries, the returns were quite sufficient, and comparison was all that was here in question. He could only say, that the manufacturers of this country would not be alive to their own interests if for the sake of extending foreign markets they sacrificed the growing and permanent advantages which the markets of our own possessions afforded to them. He (Lord Sandon) knew the apprehensions entertained by his right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, lest he should be fettered and embarrassed by our high duties on Brazilian sugar in his coming negotiations with the Brazilian government. He (Lord Sandon) knew that he thought, that that government would be disposed to place discriminating duties upon our manufactures in favour of those of countries which admitted her produce on more favourable terms; but, he believed these apprehensions to be exaggerated. The Brazilians sold to us much of their produce; for their sugar they found a ready market elsewhere. They bought our manufactures now in preference to those of other countries, because they were cheaper and better; they would not refuse to buy them as long as they were cheaper and better, and as long as they could pay for them, which indirectly they, though not directly, found the means of doing. He (Lord Sandon) was aware that this circuitous

payment was not so convenient to the British merchant, and he regretted it; but there were greater considerations at the present moment which forbade him to apply the remedy proposed. One point of the speech of the noble Lord had been received with great rapture and applause by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he thought, when examined, it would be found to have nothing in it. The noble Lord said, it was all very fine for the West-India proprietors to talk about free labour, but it was very well known that they sent home their own sugar, and sent out sugar, the produce of slave labour, for consumption in the West Indies in its place. Now the fact was, that the West-India proprietors had nothing whatever to do with the matter. The West Indies refine no sugar. What refined sugar they used, had been always brought from England, and as long as there was a surplus supply of British sugar enough for the consumption of Great Britain it was colonial sugar that returned there. But when that surplus ceased, the refined sugar sent into our own colonies for their consumption was, by an act of the present Government, foreign sugar undoubtedly, but had the planter or the proprietor anything to do with that? Nothing whatever; he did not export it to the colonies—the merchant or refiner did it, as an article of trade, and was alone responsible for it. But did the West Indian ask for it. On the contrary, they remonstrated against it; Jamaica had memorialized; Demerara had actually prohibited its introduction. But her Majesty's Government refused to listen to these remonstrances, and then taunted the West Indian with the result of their own act. This clap-trap, therefore, successful as it might appear at the moment when it was delivered, when examined was found to be destitute of the slightest real bearing on the question. —If, then, he had succeeded in persuading the House that, financially, the prospect was one of at least doubtful result—that it must either encourage slave-grown sugar to a large amount, or that the revenue could not be made up, for no increase in the consumption of free labour sugar paying the lower duty, would be expected, adequate to make up the sum required—if he had succeeded in showing that, commercially, there was no sufficient inducement to take the proposed step, and that the consumer could not be materially benefitted by its adoption, surely he was entitled to say, that not even a temptation



was offered to concur in the proposition of the Government for giving facilities to the admission of foreign sugar, as long as such a step would tend to defeat the great experiment which they were embarked in, for obtaining tropical produce by means of free emancipated labour, and as long as there was a fair hope and prospect that that experiment would be successful. With these views and feelings, he could not have said less than he had done; and thanking the House for the attention which they had paid to him, he begged leave to move his amendment,—

“ That, considering the efforts and sacrifices which Parliament and the country have made for the abolition of the Slave-trade and slavery, with the earnest hope that their exertions and example might lead to the mitigation and final extinction of these evils in other countries, this House is not prepared (especially with the present prospects of the supply of sugar from British possessions) to adopt the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government for the reduction of the duty on foreign sugar.”

Mr. Hogg rose, to second the resolution moved by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool—a resolution which not only disapproved of the specific measures proposed by her Majesty's Ministers, but declared that they ought not to be taken into consideration by the House; and he thought that the House would be of opinion that this was the fit and proper way to deal with a proposal which would involve in ruin the most valuable of our foreign possessions, would violate the plighted faith of the country, and which disregarded the most sacred dictates of humanity. He would not have ventured to have obtruded himself on the attention of the House, were it not for the relation in which he stood towards a part of the empire whose interests would be most seriously affected by these measures; and under these circumstances he ventured to hope for the kind indulgence of the House. He (Mr. Hogg) was not versed in parliamentary tactics, but he certainly had expected that the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies would have heard what the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool had to propose, and the reasons he had to urge in its support, before he (Lord J. Russell) would have addressed the House. The resolution of which the noble Lord opposite had given notice, indicated the consciousness of coming defeat, and to prevent that defeat being converted into utter discomfiture, the noble Lord had deemed it necessary to

rise before the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, and to address to the House one of those spirited and party speeches which no man could pronounce with greater force, ability, or effect. The noble Lord felt that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was, as it had been designated by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, barren and sterile indeed. The noble Lord felt that it was expedient to make a sort of supplementary speech to bolster up the deficiencies of what was courteously called the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, before it was safe to allow the subject to be submitted to discussion in the House. In the course of that supplementary speech the noble Lord had evinced the greatest sensibility and fear, lest it should be supposed in the House and in the country, that the recent defeats of the Ministry had any thing to do with the measures thus suddenly proposed. No such suggestion had proceeded from his (Mr. Hogg's) side of the House, as the noble Lord took good care to have the first word, and to address the House, not in reply to, but in anticipation of the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool. Whence then this sensibility as to an imputation which had not been made? He (Mr. Hogg) knew not from what internal monitor had proceeded the suggestion which the noble Lord was thus anxious to repel. Her Majesty's Ministers had sustained repeated and signal defeats in measures brought in by them as a Government, and close following those defeats, they had introduced three of the most important measures that could affect the interests or agitate the feelings of the country. The introduction of slave-grown sugar—the timber duties—and the Corn-laws. And instead of submitting them to deliberate discussion on the broad grounds of national policy and justice, had huddled them together without notice, and apparently without consideration, in a Budget speech. The noble Lord after expressing his anxiety that it might not be supposed that these measures in any way emanated from the recent defeats of his Government, went at length into the financial difficulties of the country, and addressing himself to his (Mr. Hogg's) side of the House, said “ you never objected to the expenditure that has been made, and the course you now adopt is factious.” And the noble Lord then proceeded at some length to

repudiate the conduct pursued by the opposition side of the House, and to favor them with a lecture as to the course they ought to have adopted. He (Mr. Hogg) admitted with pain and regret the financial difficulties of the country. He would not dwell upon them in detail, but would contrast the Budget of 1830, the last brought forward by a Conservative Government, with the Budget of the present year. In the Budget brought forward in 1830, there was an excess of revenue over expenditure of 2,667,000*l.* In the present Budget the revenue fell short of the expenditure by 2,421,776*l.*, thus making the deficiency in the present Budget as contrasted with that of 1830 upwards of 5,000,000*l.* The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) in his financial exposition, attempted to mix up the foreign policy of the country with the question of finance, and urged as a legitimate conclusion, that the whole of that policy had been approved of by his (Mr. Hogg's) side of the House, because they had not withheld their assent from certain armaments and expeditions rendered necessary by the course which Government had pursued—may he even had the hardihood to refer to China. It is true that Conservatives did not object to the expedition sent to that country. He himself was ready to admit, that this country could not have communicated with the emperor of China with honor, or with effect, except in the presence of an armed force. But, did it therefore follow, that he approved of the policy which rendered that armament necessary? Surely, the noble Lord must ill recollect the debates which had taken place in that House last Session, when he ventured to state, that the foreign policy of the Government had always been approved of by those who sat on his (Mr. Hogg's) side of the House. The noble Lord then adverted to the deliberations of Government on these subjects, and said, that the Cabinet had long had them under their consideration, and were all agreed as to the introduction of the principles of free trade, at least to the extent of the propositions now before the House. If this were true, then he said that the House, and the country, and the commercial interests of the empire, especially of that part of it with which he (Mr. Hogg) was more immediately connected, had just and strong grounds of complaint. He had bailed with pleasure and received

with gratitude, the measure of justice conceded by the present Government to India in 1836. He was always pleased and proud to bear his testimony to the value of that measure. In 1836, the duties on sugar from the East and West Indies were equalized, and a great and valuable boon was thereby conferred on the East Indies. It was not, however, more than six weeks since a discussion had taken place on the rum duties, and if at that time the Government had determined on the introduction of a measure like the present, the President of the Board of Trade was bound by official duty to have then given the House some intimation of it. It was misleading the House and the public not to do so. It was grossly misleading the public. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Labouchere) then said, as yet we have only nominally equalised the duties on East and West-India sugar—until we have equalised the duty on the whole produce of the sugar-cane—until we have equalised the duty on rum, I cannot say that we shall have done justice to India, or put that country in a position to supply the people of England with cheap and free labour sugar. Upon the faith of that declaration, capital to an immense amount had been sent out to India—machinery had been exported, and manufacturers had been shipped to that quarter of the world with the intention of bringing home sugar in return. All this good would now be marred—great loss, perhaps absolute ruin, would be entailed on individuals, and yet the noble Lord solemnly assured the House, that the present measure had long been determined upon. How, he asked, could the noble Lord justify this concealment which had misled the mercantile world, and induced individuals to embark in a course of enterprise that could only end in ruin? What was the principal argument adduced by the noble Lord in support of this measure? He said the object he had in view was to give cheap sugar to the consumer, and yet in the same breath he ridiculed the apprehensions of the West-Indians, and contended that the proposed measure would not cheapen sugar more than 1*s.* 6*d.* per cwt. Great indeed must be the pressure of difficulties when a mind so acute as that of the noble Lord, could be driven to such inconsistency. The next point to which the noble Lord adverted, was the advantage to be derived

from fair competition, not only to the consumer, but also to the producer of sugar in the East and West Indies. The noble Lord did not attempt to push this argument quite so far as it was carried before the Import Duties Committee. There it was broadly contended, that the best mode to put down the slave-trade, and to encourage the production of free-labour sugar, was to expose it to competition with sugar the produce of slave labour. Now he (Mr. Hogg) begged the attention of the House to the instances referred to by the noble Lord, in order to show the beneficial operation of free competition. He referred to the manufacturers of earthenware and gloves, which he stated had thriven when exposed to competition between England and France. But he would ask, did it therefore follow that two countries could compete with each other under circumstances wholly different, when the supply of late in one was restricted, and almost prohibited, and in the other unlimited? Did it therefore follow that the West Indies, where slave labour was prohibited, and free labour scarcely to be had, could contend in the production of sugar with Cuba and the Brazils, where there was no restriction as to labour either slave or free? He felt bound to say, that it was absurd to contend that the cases were in any manner parallel. But what said Mr. Hume, the great champion of free trade, when examined before the Import Duties Committee? His words are :—

“The laws in this country having deprived the planter in Jamaica of that means (meaning slave labour) of raising his produce, I conceive that this is a question taken out of the category of free trade.”

Again, what did Mr. Hume say as to the introduction of slave-labour sugar? He said :—

“That if our colonies could not supply sugar sufficient for our consumption, then, but not before, the public must make up their mind as to the distinction to be maintained between free and slave-labour sugar.”

The noble Lord then referred with some exultation to the practice which has prevailed of late, of importing coffee from the Brazils into the Cape of Good Hope, and shipping it from thence to this country for consumption. He (Mr. Hogg) confessed himself at a loss to understand what argument could be derived from that practice. His reply was, that the whole proceeding was a fraud upon the revenue, and that the

right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, had introduced a bill last Session for the express purpose of putting a stop to that fraud. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had rested the Government proposition upon three grounds; the scarcity in the supply of sugar, the high price of sugar, and the financial difficulties of the country. He (Mr. Hogg) would not dwell further on the question of finance, and the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool had already shewn the House that there was no reason to apprehend a scarcity of sugar, or a continuance of the late high prices. He (Mr. Hogg) had taken every means to inform himself accurately as to the prospects of supply for the present year, and the result was very nearly the same as had been stated by the noble Member for Liverpool. The stock on the 1st of January last was 35,000 tons; the estimated imports from the West Indies 115,000 tons; from the Mauritius 35,000 tons; and from the East Indies 60,000 tons, making a total of 245,000 tons; while the consumption of the United Kingdom had never reached 200,000 tons, leaving a surplus of 45,000 tons, which must be exported to the Continent, where it would meet the sugars from the Brazils and Cuba, and thus tend to keep down the prices in the home markets. The last Gazette average price for British plantation sugar was 37s. 7½d. per cwt., being a progressive fall of 12s. since the commencement of the year, and reducing the price of sugar to a trifle more than 6d. per pound to the consumer. There was, therefore, for the present year a supply exceeding the consumption, nearly one-fourth, and prices moderate, with a falling market. Thus much as to the argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, founded on the scarcity and high price of sugar. The right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) in making his statement, said: “In fixing the rates of duties, I still leave 50 per cent. in favour of British colonial sugar.” That no doubt was true in fact, but practically it afforded no protection at all, when the qualities of the sugars, and the quantity of saccharine matter which they contained, were taken into consideration, and it was only that very morning that the right hon. Gentleman had apprised the House of his intention to alter his announced scale of duties. This was not the first occasion when her Majesty’s Government had pro-

posed an important measure, and subsequently, on obtaining information respecting it, had made most material alterations. It was only that day they had learned that there was to be any distinction with respect to the clayed sugars of Cuba and Brazil, and he had, therefore, a right to suppose that the measure had been introduced in haste and with precipitation, otherwise the right hon. Gentleman could not have failed to have been adequately informed on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had broadly stated in his Budget speech that he would reduce the duties upon all foreign sugar to 36s., which would have been an absolute bonus to the slave-labour sugar of Cuba and Brazil. The difference between the fine sugars of the Havannah, and the ordinary brown or Muscovado West Indian, was more than 12s. per cwt.; so that a man, by purchasing fine Cuba sugar, though nominally dearer, would in reality get a greater quantity of saccharine matter than he could obtain for the same money of free labour sugar. He (Mr. Hogg) had been informed by a gentleman well acquainted with the trade, that one cwt. of colonial sugar, when refined, yielded 81lb. refined, 22lb. bastard, 24lb. molasses, and 5lb. waste, while one cwt. Havannah yields 90lb. refined, 10lb. bastard, and 10lb. molasses. To show that 36s. would be an inadequate protection, he begged again to refer the House to the evidence before the Import Duties Committee. What, he asked, was the request urged by the Brazilian merchants who appeared before that committee? In such cases men generally asked for a little more than they were likely to get; but all they ventured to ask for was, that the duty on foreign grown sugar should be reduced to 36s., and the Government at once conceded the whole of their demand. He believed that this country would be inundated with foreign sugar at a protecting duty of 36s.—yes, he believed it would. He did not stand there to pretend that, in opposing the introduction of slave-grown sugar, he would not enhance the price of sugar. He did not think that the West Indies could ever compete with slave-grown sugar, and that the East Indies could not for many years to come. To show the House the extraordinary power of production of Cuba, that Island produced one-fourth of the consumption of the world, while it was an astounding

fact, that twenty years ago Cuba imported sugar for her own consumption. A great deal of stress had been laid upon the advantage that would result to the revenue from the increased consumption, occasioned by a diminished price of sugar, and upon the consequent benefit that would arise to the manufacturing interests from increased exports to sugar-producing countries. Of course every one must admit the general principle, that reduced prices tended to increase consumption. He (Mr. Hogg) fully admitted every thing that had been said in that and preceding debates as to the necessity and expediency of reducing, as far as was practicable, the price of every article consumed by the lower classes. He admitted further the high moral obligation which, under the changed habits of the people with respect to temperance, now existed to cheapen to the utmost the price of sugar. He felt that the result would be, to increase the consumption of tea and coffee, and to prevent the working classes having recourse to ardent spirits. It appeared, however, that alterations in price did not affect the consumption so much as the House had been led to suppose. In 1830, the price of sugar was 24s. 11d. per cwt., and the consumption was 3,722,044 cwt. In 1831, the price was 23s. 8d., and the consumption was 3,781,011 cwt. In 1828, the price was as high as 31s. 8d. and the consumption was 3,601,419 cwt., and in 1827, when the price was 35s. 9d., the consumption was 3,340,927 cwt. Now the highest price was in 1827, when sugar was 35s. 9d., and the lowest price was in 1831, when sugar was only 23s. 8d., and yet the consumption in 1827 fell short of the consumption in 1831 by only a little more than 400,000 cwt.; although, in the latter year, there was a four years increase of population; so that the consumption of sugar in this country seemed to depend, of course, to a certain extent, on price, but a great deal more on commercial prosperity and high wages. With commerce prosperous, and wages high, sugar would always be consumed to a great extent in this country, if the price were not absolutely extravagant. With respect to the increased demand for our manufactures in Brazil, consequent upon the reduction of the duty upon foreign sugar, he (Mr. Hogg) believed that Government were calculating rather loosely. If we admitted slave-grown sugar into

this country, we should get it chiefly from Cuba, where it was cheapest, and not from the Brazils. In proof of this he begged to state, that although the Americans who traded with the Brazils, experienced the same difficulty that we did in obtaining returns from that country, yet they were in the habit of returning empty, rather than bring a cargo of sugar which they found they could import cheaper from Cuba; so that the great and wonderful advantage of increasing the export of our manufactures to the Brazils, was nearly imaginary. Thus the bounty given to sugar was exactly in proportion to the encouragement given to slavery by the country which produced it. Cuba, where the slave-trade raged in all its horrors, would benefit most; next the Brazils, where slave-labour exclusively prevailed; while our own colonies from which slavery was excluded, would be ruined by the enactment. With the permission of the House he would give the exports to the Brazils, the foreign West Indies, including Cuba, the West Indies and the East Indies, from 1830 to 1839. He found, on referring to the official returns, that in 1830 the exports to the Brazils amounted to 2,400,000*l.*—in 1831, to 1,333,000*l.*—in 1834, to 2,460,000*l.*—in 1837, to 1,824,000*l.*—in 1839, to 2,650,000*l.*, which he begged the House to bear in mind was the greatest amount of exports ever sent to the Brazils, as shown by the official returns. The exports to Cuba, which would benefit more than any other part of the world by the proposed alterations, were very trifling. They are not stated separately in the official returns, but are included in the exports to the foreign West Indies. In 1839, the total only amounted to 891,826*l.* of which he believed one-fourth did not belong to Cuba. Now contrast the above with the exports to the East and West Indies. In 1830, the exports to the East-India Company's territories, including Ceylon, were 3,895,000*l.* In 1835, the year before the equalization of the Sugar Duties, they amounted to 3,192,692*l.*—in 1836, to 4,285,829*l.*, and in 1839, to 4,748,607*l.* The exports to the West Indies in 1830, amounted to 2,838,000*l.*, and in 1839, to 3,986,598*l.* It thus appears that the exports to the East and West Indies, including the Mauritius and Ceylon, in the year 1839 amounted to 8,735,206*l.*, while, during the same period, the exports to the

Brazils amounted only to 2,650,713*l.* It would be seen that his statement varied much from that made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon the same point. He (Mr. Hogg) took his information from official returns laid before the House, and he confessed himself at a loss to know where the right hon. Gentleman got his figures when he stated to the House that in 1839 the exports to the Brazils had exceeded 5,000,000*l.*, and amounted to nearly as much as the exports to the East and West Indies, during the same year put together. [Here some hon. Member said, from the Evidence before the Import Duties' Committee.] Yes, (continued Mr. Hogg) he was aware that some such allegation had been made before that committee, but why did not the right hon. Gentleman when making an official statement to that House, refer to official returns, and not take his facts from loose allegations made by interested merchants. He had one more observation to make with regard to the evidence before that committee. Mr. Cockshott, one of the witnesses, when wishing to shew how much the price to the consumer would be reduced if the introduction of Foreign sugar was permitted, stated, that he had then a vessel at Falmouth with 265 tons of Brazil sugar, which he would be glad to deliver at 25*s.* for the white, and 21*s.* for the brown, equal in quality to British colonial at 61*s.* and 57*s.* in bond. He added, that if he were permitted to land his sugars at a duty of 24*s.* the difference in price to the consumer would be 36*s.*, while he himself would have a fair mercantile profit. So these Brazilian merchants, who modestly ask the committee to reduce the duty on Foreign sugar to 36*s.*, giving to British sugar a protection of 12*s.* admit themselves, that with a difference of 36*s.* they could realize remunerating prices. Mr. Mc. Queen, a gentleman of great intelligence, who was examined before the East India Produce Committee, of which he (Mr. Hogg) was a member, stated that one acre of Land in Cuba would produce as much sugar as six of the most fertile acres in the East Indies. The Government measure disregarded all the considerations suggested by the report of the Import Duties' Committee, upon which it professed to be founded. That committee had recommended that a change should be effected "in such a manner that existing interests may suffer as little as possible in the

transition to a more equitable and liberal state of things." That was the principle that until now had always been acted upon; that was the principle which had been acted upon by Mr. Rice, as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1836. When introducing the bill for the Equalization of the Sugar Duties, that right hon. Gentleman said, that he admitted the principle and fairness of giving adequate notice to the interests affected, and he contended that the discussions which had taken place in Parliament had afforded what was equivalent to two years notice of the intention of Government to introduce the measure then under consideration. Upon the same occasion Mr. Rice most strongly expressed his opinion against the introduction of any foreign grown sugar, not actually the produce of the British territories in India, and said, that it would be a fraud in legislation to admit foreign-grown East-India sugar, thereby excluding the produce of our subsidiary States. The Cabinet in 1836, therefore, could not have had the remotest intention of allowing the introduction of foreign sugar, still less slave-grown sugar into this country. But, was such a question suggested in 1836? It was—the price of sugar was then high, it exceeded 63s., and the expediency of reducing the duty on foreign sugar was contended for, both on the grounds of lowering the price, and of encouraging our trade to the Brazils. The right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had not stated how he expected to realize the additional revenue of 700,000*l.* He (Mr. Hogg) feared that it could only be effected by dislodging British sugar, paying a duty of 24s., and introducing so much foreign sugar at a duty of 36s., as would make up the required sum. This was the only way in which the proposed alteration could serve the revenue, and it would be easy to estimate what a vast amount of British plantation sugar must be dislodged in the home market. When referring to the present time as chosen for these changes, the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had said most deplorably, "Look at the present state of affairs! A most important crisis has arrived!" What the nature of that crisis might be, whether financial, commercial, or political, he (Mr. Hogg) could not pretend to say; but the pressure of that crisis was the reason assigned by the right hon. Gentleman for bringing forward these propositions at the

present time. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) in his speech that evening, had dwelt with satisfaction on the state of the labouring classes in the West Indies. He had described the comforts, almost the luxuries enjoyed by the emancipated negro, and he stated that the great measure of emancipation had been attended with a success, far beyond the expectations of its most sanguine advocates. But when the noble Lord thus described in glowing language the condition of the labouring classes, he had altogether forgotten to advert to the position of the proprietors. The situation of the labourer was such as the noble Lord had represented, but it was derived from the power he possessed of exacting from the proprietors whatever terms he thought fit to demand. When things were progressing towards the introduction of free labour, when the experiment which had been made was about to prove successful, when the labourer was happy and contented, and when the proprietor was making every effort to conform to the wishes and injunctions of the Legislature. When he was submitting quietly to past losses, and still incurring a large expenditure, in the hope that his sugars would find a market in this country, was that the moment to mar, by a measure like the present, the hopes and the prospects that have been thus fondly indulged in. The noble Lord might contemplate with satisfaction the condition of the emancipated negro now, but he would beg of him to look at the other side of the picture, and to consider what would be the state of that negro if the present measure should pass into a law. Did the House suppose, that after the measure of emancipation was carried, any West-India proprietor would have continued to submit to the sacrifices he has since been called upon to make, could he have anticipated the introduction of such a measure as the present? He should like to ask the noble Lord what he would have said, if, during the discussion on the Emancipation Bill, which he has told us the people of Liverpool, and the West-India proprietors so strongly opposed, some hon. Member had said on their behalf, that just as they should be emerging from their difficulties, how did they know that the Government would not come forward and propose the introduction into our markets of the slave-grown sugar of other countries? If any hon. Member had ventured to risk such a

suggestion, doubtless he would have been indignantly hooted down by the House. With respect to the East Indies, he (Mr. Hogg) did not think that the operation of the proposed measure would be quite so injurious as in the West Indies. He had endeavoured to fight the battle for the East Indies when claiming for the produce of that country the same duties as were imposed on the same produce when coming from the West Indies, and had opposed many friends with whom it was painful for him to differ; but he had done so believing that the principles for which he contended were true. He then contended, and he was still prepared to contend, that the same duties ought to be imposed on the same produce when imported from different dependencies of the same empire, but the course which he had then pursued should not prevent him from looking at present to the condition and interests of the West Indies. Let it not however be supposed, that because he supported the resolution of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, he was an advocate for restrictions on trade. He would have no restrictions that were not called for by some paramount national policy, or from a due consideration for some existing interests. The great object of the equalization of duties in 1836 was to secure cheap and free-labour sugar to the consumers in this country, and he had already shown from what passed on that occasion, that Government could not then have had any intention of introducing foreign, and still less slave-grown sugar into this market. He would now beg the attention of the House to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, in June last, in the debate upon Mr. Ewart's motion for the reduction of duty upon foreign sugar. Mr. Labouchere then said,

"He must admit, that there were circumstances connected with the subject—circumstances which had led numerous bodies of persons, interested in the great branches of trade to petition Parliament, which, at the present moment rendered it natural and proper, even more than at any other time, that the question should be seriously considered by the House of Commons."

And again,

"If on looking at this question, he were to do so, merely, in a financial and commercial point of view. If he were to apply to it only

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the ordinary rules, by which the House ought to be guided in discussing matters of this kind—rules, which involved the extension of a due protection to the Colonies, to the consumers of colonial produce, and to the trade of this country, he should have no hesitation in saying, that an abundant case had been made out for a reduction of the duty upon foreign sugar, to such an extent as should admit of its importation into this country. But could they for a moment induce themselves to say, that the whole question of sugar, and of the sugar trade, was one of that simple nature. Could they for a moment induce themselves to say, that this question was not one which they were bound to consider in connection with many others. Could they bring themselves to believe, that they would be meeting the real wishes of their constituents, or that they would be doing their duty to the country, if in dealing with this question, they excluded the consideration of other matters of a very important nature, which they were bound to bear in their minds when they attempted to deal with anything affecting the interests of the sugar producing colonies."

And again,

"He owned he was not able to make up his mind that that was a course which he ought to recommend to the House. He did not believe it was a course that would be agreeable to their constituents, when they came to understand all the facts of the case."

Speaking of the other articles of slave produce admitted into this country, he said,

"He was not prepared to say, that upon this subject the course of legislation in England been consistent, but he thought that a broad distinction was to be drawn between the importation of sugar and the importation of tobacco and cotton. It was to be borne in mind, that the two latter commodities, did not enter into competition with any similar articles raised by free labour in our own colonies."

And again,

"He found also, that while this diminution was going on in the supply from the West Indies, the quantity imported from the East Indies and the Mauritius had considerably increased; so much so, that last year there was imported from those distant regions, no less a quantity than 1,131,000 cwt.; that fact undoubtedly justified a hope, that we might look to that quarter for a very considerable supply of this necessary article of consumption."

One more extract and he had done,

"But be that as it might, he believed that the people of this country required the great

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experiment which they had undertaken to be fairly tried, and he was satisfied that they would think it was not fairly tried, if at that moment, when the colonists were struggling with such difficulties as he had described, and which were mainly incidental upon the alterations which the experiment necessarily introduced into the social condition of the West Indies; we were to open the flood-gates of a foreign supply and to inundate the British market with sugar, the produce of slave labour."

Such were the opinions expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, only ten months ago, and they were then responded to by the whole House. He (Mr. Hogg) begged to assure the House, that the sentiments which he had expressed were not merely those of himself as an individual; the same sentiments had already been communicated to her Majesty's Government, by the Court of Directors of the East India Company as a body. The view of the subject, taken by the Home Government of India as far as they were not controlled by her Majesty's Government, would be seen from the following letter, which, with the permission of the House he would read. It is dated the fifth of May, and addressed to W. Clay, Esq., M.P.

"Sir,—In reference to the intention which has been expressed on the part of her Majesty's Ministers to propose a reduction of duty upon foreign sugars imported into Great Britain. I am commanded by the Court of Directors of the East India Company to call the immediate attention of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, to the fact, that consequent upon the recent equalization of the duties upon East India sugar with those upon sugar from the West Indies, an impetus has been given to the production of East India sugar, which, if unchecked, will assuredly and without delay, yield to the consumers of this country an ample supply, and enable India to take more of the manufactures of Great Britain in return. But, if in the early stage of the great measure of equalisation, from which so much benefit, both to India and to England, is justly anticipated, an alteration be made in the duties upon foreign sugar with the view of bringing a large supply of it into competition in the home market with the sugars of the British possessions, the Court apprehend nothing less than a total defeat of the hopes and expectations under which they so long sought, and at length successfully accomplished, that act of justice for India. The Court desire me further to submit that the effect of any such change will be most seriously detrimental to capitalists, both European and native, who have been

led to embark their property in the cultivation of sugar. The Court rely upon the Board to interpose with a view to obviate the injurious consequences which the Court deprecate, and to protect the people from severe disappointment just at the moment when they are beginning to reap the benefits of the equalization of duty so wisely and justly accorded to them by Parliament." "I have, &c."

In order to show the House how severe must be the pressure in India, if a measure like the present should be carried without adequate notice, he begged to state to the House, that the British merchants in India, made advances to the Ryots, or native cultivators of the soil, for sugar, indigo, and all other produce. He believed, that advances for the coming year to an immense amount must already have been made on the faith of the continuance of the present duties, and from all he had heard, he had little doubt, that the produce of India, next year, would not be much under 100,000 tons. But apart from all considerations relating to the interests of the East or West Indies. Supposing, that the present prospects as to sugar were other than he had represented—suppose, that the supply from our own possessions, was not likely much to exceed the consumption, and that a continuance of the late high prices was to be apprehended. He asked the House, whether they would, on that account, consent to repeal the great and glorious measure of emancipation? And whether they would add to the disgrace of such a proceeding, by acting indirectly, and repealing it, by the provisions of a customs bill? If they did regret the efforts and the sacrifices they had made for the suppression of the horrid traffic in human flesh, let them boldly and openly declare that regret—let them boldly and openly avow their intention to retrace their steps, and let them give to the West Indies with the rest of the world, unrestricted liberty to import slaves from the coast of Africa; and let them proclaim to the people of England, that the doctrines of free trade and political economy were paramount to the dictates of humanity, and the holiest obligations of religion. Was it to be endured in a Christian—nay, was it to be endured in a deliberative assembly—that after they had expended twenty millions of money, in the extirpation of slavery in our own possessions, and more than twenty millions in attempting to extinguish it abroad



—after they had maintained settlements, and sent out expeditions at a frightful expenditure of life and of treasure—after they had fearlessly encountered and continued to encounter the risk of war with foreign countries, by the interference of our cruisers, they should be called upon to give fresh life and vigour to that revolting traffic, because sugar happened to be a penny a pound dearer, and because her Majesty's Ministers had deranged the finances of the country? It was well known to Parliament, and to the country, when slave-labour was abolished within our possessions, that the effect must inevitably be, at least, for many years, to diminish the production, and consequently to enhance the price of sugar. Did the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, suppose, that any such paltry consideration could have influenced the country when accomplishing such an object? Or, that such a consideration could influence them now? It mattered not how specious might be the grounds on which the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, endeavoured to rest the question. He (Mr. Hogg), did not believe, that the House of Commons would tolerate, that a tottering Ministry, instead of dealing with the great questions of the corn-laws and slave-labour, on the grounds of national policy and justice, should, for purposes which they did not, and perhaps dare not avow, be permitted to introduce them into the Budget, as mere matters of finance, and to urge in their excuse, a crisis brought about by their own misrule. They all knew, that the noble Lord was not only an able, but a bold politician; and the success which had attended him, might induce him to think he might be not only bold, but reckless. But he would venture to tell the noble Lord, that he would find that night, there was a limit to the endurance of the country, and to the confidence of those who surrounded him. If this were a mere party struggle, as had been insinuated by the noble Lord, Government might possibly escape, as they had lately done, with a majority against them, of some ten or twenty. But being a question that involved the honour of the nation, the feelings of humanity, and the precepts of the Gospel, he felt confident, that the House, without reference to party or to politics, would declare their opinion, by such a majority, that could hardly fail to prove fatal to the Go-

vernment, and would, most assuredly, be hailed with satisfaction by the country.

Mr. *Hawes* was not at all surprised at the turn which the debate had taken, after the speech which had been made by the noble Lord in the opening of the discussion. He was not at all surprised, that the statesman-like views which the noble Lord had taken of the commercial policy of the country, had been, by Gentlemen opposite, suddenly narrowed down to a question of mere East and West India interests. Neither was he surprised when the hon. Member who had just sat down declared himself an advocate of free trade in all cases in which no existing interests, no vested interests were endangered. But though not surprised at what he heard, he must confess he was struck with the boldness of the hon. Members inconsistency. But the other day he was assailing the West Indian monopoly, in conjunction with him (Mr. *Hawes*), to day he was its advocate, because it now was a useful ally to the additional monopoly in the East. The hon. Member then grounded his claim to the admission of East Indian Rum to the English market, upon equal terms, on the principles of free trade, and the interests of the consumer. Both are now forgotten in his advocacy of the East Indian interest. When, however, the question of free trade was fairly brought before the House, he always expected that a serious effort would be made to divert the attention of the House, from those interests which immediately affected the condition of the working classes of the country, to those of the monopolist. In that expectation he had not been disappointed; it was sufficiently apparent in the speech which the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, intended as an answer to the speech of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies. Hon. Gentlemen opposite might as well be told at once, that this was no sugar debate. If indeed it were, certain right hon. Gentlemen opposite could scarcely be expected to take a hostile part in it; for, in the year 1828, the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge had assented to propositions infinitely more favourable to the introduction of slave-grown sugar than the present. [Mr. *Goulburn*: No, no.] Well, if the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge had not consented to such propositions, the hon. Member for Harwich had. It was either the one or the other of them. Now, however, they both expressed their great horror of a similar proposal. Mr. *Charles*

Grant now Lord Glenelg, when he brought the question of the sugar duties before the House, stated that to the scale of duties which he then proposed, viz: a duty on West India sugar of 20s., and to quote the report in 'Hansard' on the 9th June, 1828.

"His next proposition was that the duty on East Indian sugar should be lowered 5s., and that foreign sugar should be admitted at a duty of 28s., (and Mr. Grant added) that this proposition was favourably considered by his right hon. Friend, and other Members of the Government."

After this, he (Mr. Hawes) would leave the right hon. Gentleman to reconcile his present, with his past policy upon this question. But passing from this topic he certainly expected, that the noble Lord in bringing forward his amendment on this important subject, would have made some reference to the present embarrassed state of the trade of the country. No one could view it without apprehension and alarm. He must know, that trade was greatly depressed in the manufacturing districts. But there was not a word from the noble Lord on this subject—not a word shewing that the noble Lord had any plan, or adopted any principle calculated to relieve our trade, or the sufferings from artisans, or meet the financial difficulties of the country. Now, he undertook to say, that the state of trade was more depressed than at any former period. From peculiar circumstances connected with the United States, the exports in that direction had lessened. From the state of our relations with China, hon. Gentlemen opposite had not ventured to condemn the general policy of the Government, and had they done so, the interruption of our friendly relations with China from whatever cause or policy, however mistaken, now added to the depression of trade. Hence the pressing question for the House to consider was, whether that could be removed by emancipating it from the restrictions which now fetter it. With regard to our trade, there was every reason to suppose, that whilst the population and capital of this country had greatly increased, trade had not increased in the same proportion. This was the consequence of narrowing the channels of commerce, of refusing to expand our Legislation in coincidence with our commercial enterprise, and of our practically declining to open new markets to our merchants. There was no mode of making trade keep pace with

population, but by increasing the number of markets, by tempting foreigners to buy our goods by taking theirs in exchange. If the House referred to the value of British exports in 1801, a time of war, they would find the amount to be 39,700,000*l.*, which was at the rate of 2*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.* per head, for the whole population. In 1840, making a similar comparison of exports with population, the rate per head would not be more than 1*l.* 17*s.* It appeared, then, that while population and capital had increased, trade had not increased proportionately; and such being the case, it was of the utmost importance, that the question now before the House should not be treated as a party question, not as a sugar question, but as a question which concerned the great commercial and permanent interests of the country. The noble Lord who introduced the amendment should have put forth the principles on which his party were prepared to deal with the great interests now in peril, and then the country having them and those of her Majesty's Government before them, might temperately consider, and calmly decide between them. But it was necessary to deal with the objections raised specifically to this plan on the ground, that it would increase slavery and the slave-trade, and the plea of injustice to the West-India interest. The West-India interest, during the last fifty years, had always been complaining of their sufferings. They had been ruined every year during that period. In 1798, when the slave-trade flourished, they said, that nothing could save the planters but a high price of sugar. During the war they complained of unusual competition from foreign countries. When slavery was abolished, the same complaint continued. They still demanded protection—that was to say, that the people of this country should be taxed for their own peculiar benefit. These were not mere assertions, but statements founded on official and West-Indian authorities. The plea of injustice was always raised by the West-Indian interest, whenever any measure endangering their monopoly was proposed. Twenty millions had not satisfied them, nor would twenty millions more, so long as an unjust protection enfeebled their exertions. Protection, not free trade, would be their ruin. When he heard the hon. Member for Beverley speak of making common cause with the West-India interest, he owned he felt astonished at the facility with which he changed his opinions. When the question of equali-

zation of duties on East-India produce was before the House, no man had more eloquently contended, than the hon. Member, that the free trade enjoyed by the British possessions in India was the foundation of their prosperity. All the great branches of its staple produce, were supplanting the produce of slave labour. Indigo from the East Indies, which was of comparatively recent introduction, had already supplanted slave-grown indigo, in every market of the world. East-India sugar competed with West-India sugar, even while slavery existed, and the cotton of India was sold at a lower price than slave-grown cotton, and was supplanting American and slave-grown cotton, in all the markets of the East. He laid it down, then, as an incontrovertible position, that free-labour and free trade, was, under all circumstances, more productive than slave labour and protection, and he could give no better illustration of this, than by referring to Porto Rico, one half of which was cultivated by free, and the other by slave labour; the former presenting every where the most cheerful and luxuriant prospects, the latter, a state of comparative misery and degradation. In that portion of the island cultivated by free labour, Captain Kinter, in his account of Porto Rico, stated, that the planters were flourishing; and, on the contrary, in that part of the island cultivated by slave labour, he states, that the estates are mortgaged, and the planters embarrassed. And, in reference to Cuba, he would just remind the House, that Admiral Fleming, in his evidence before the West-Indian Committee, stated it to be his opinion, that if slavery were put an end to, not a single estate would be thrown out of cultivation. In fact, the climate and the soil gave these islands their legitimate and only advantages. He believed, therefore, that by a reduction of duty, they were taking the course most likely to promote the permanent interests of the free labourers, and to enable free labour to compete successfully with slave labour, because, by the removal of an injurious protection, enterprise and skill would be stimulated healthfully and successfully. The sugar grown in the West Indies would have to rely only on its own resources. Economical production would be promoted, and the legitimate application of capital—sources of wealth which neither time nor circumstances would impair. His right hon. Friend, the Member for the Tower Ham-

lets, he ventured to anticipate, would take another objection. His right hon. Friend was impressed with the idea, that the reduction of duty on our colonial sugar, would encourage the slave trade and slavery; to promote either the one or the other, he deemed a sin—a violation of the law of God. In fact, his right hon. Friend took, in common with many others, a religious objection to the supposed result of this measure. Now, granting, for the sake of argument, that slavery was sinful, and its encouragement the consequence of this measure, was his right hon. Friend prepared to contend, that the importation of slave-grown sugar, the produce of countries as independent as our own, and its consumption by our own population was sinful and that he was entitled, because he so viewed it, to enforce his views by act of Parliament? Was not his right hon. and learned Friend imposing his own view of what was against the law of God upon others—was he not proposing to legislate on the very same basis on which had rested every bigoted and intolerant measure, introduced into this House. Would not the same principle be equally good for the enforcement of an act of uniformity, and equally so for the insisting upon any matter of faith or ceremonial? How far were they to go, or where could they stop in the application of such a principle in matters of trade? Ought they not equally to exclude all kinds of slave produce? Did his right hon. and learned Friend go that length? He had no doubt his right hon. and learned Friend had slave-grown produce in his pocket in the shape of snuff, cotton in one shape or another, about his person, also the produce of slave labour. There was as much violation, it must be admitted, in using one kind of produce as another. This objection he humbly considered as untenable, and inconsistent with those principles of religious liberty and the rights of conscience, of which his right hon. Friend had for so long a period been the eloquent and consistent advocate. He was surprised at hearing hon. Gentlemen opposite say, that a diminution of price would not increase consumption. He thought the increase of consumption capable of proof. He found, that the consumption of sugar and molasses included, was, in 1839, upwards of 20lbs. per head. The population was 24,000,000, and the price of sugar 23s. and a fraction in bond. In 1840, the consumption was but 15lb per head, whilst the popula-

tion had augmented to 28,000,000. And the revenue of 1840, as compared with 1831, showed a falling off, notwithstanding the increase of population, of upwards of 200,000*l.* But if the consumption of sugar had increased with the increasing population, the revenue ought to have been in the following proportion. As 24,000,000, the population in 1831, is to 4,650,590*l.*, the revenue of the same year, so is 28,000,000, the population in 1841, to 5,425,000*l.* But the actual revenue in 1841, was only 4,449,000*l.* or upwards of 900,000*l.* less than it ought to have been, according to the consumption of 1831—a year selected on account of the low price of sugar, as 1840 is selected on account of the high price of sugar. A judicious reduction of the duty, therefore, by the admission of foreign sugar, would have been the means of preventing any defalcation of the revenue. But to show, that the consumptive ability of the people of this country is underrated, take only the quantity of sugar allowed to old female paupers, under a Poor-law dietary, viz., seven ounces of sugar per week, which being assumed as the true consumption, and no more, of the population, would give a consumption equal to 287,000 tons annually, or about 67,000 tons over and above the largest probable importation. If, however, a revenue were not to be raised from foreign sugar, would hon. Gentlemen point out any better source from which it could be derived? Our finances were admitted to be greatly in arrear, and this plan presented the means of repairing the damage without the imposition of any new tax, and with the prospect of an extension of our commerce. Under the present scale of sugar duties, adulteration was carried on to a great extent, to lower the price, as was proved by the evidence before the Import Duties Committee. And, another proof of the oppression of the present heavy duty was, that the coffee-house keepers of the metropolis had stated before the same committee, that they should not be able, if the price of sugar continued high, to supply coffee without advancing its price. That a large class would thereby be unable to purchase it for their coffee, and would, consequently, be deprived of the beverage altogether. He thought, considering these facts, that the noble Lord opposite need not have talked so lightly of a reduction of 1*d.* per pound, when the article was

one of universal consumption. But Gentlemen on the other side demanded protection for the West-Indian sugar grower. Wherever protection had been adopted, its removal had been always attended with an increase of manufactures and commerce, and nothing could more strongly illustrate this than the present condition of the manufacturing interest in Russia, where protection had been carried out with a despotic hand, and had protected no branch of manufacture from ruin, and none from unsuccessful foreign competition. At this moment, the proceedings of other nations were such as to suggest the propriety of revising our commercial system: we should soon be engaged in commercial negotiations with the United States, and Spain and Austria were both endeavouring to find relief from financial difficulties by a liberalization of their commercial codes. It was equally necessary to revise our own, whether for the maintenance of our trade, or the better preservation of peace. That peace which the right hon. Member for Tamworth so earnestly desired the other night, could be in no way so easily attained as by the reciprocal interests and ties of commerce. [*Loud cries of Order, Order.*] Hon. Gentlemen, who manifested so much impatience, should recollect, that a subject of this sort could not be treated in a cursory manner, nor could the discussions upon it, dry as they naturally were, be made entertaining, nor would they come to a very speedy conclusion. The noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, whose able and statesmanlike speech would make a deep impression out of doors, proposed to overcome our financial difficulties without the imposition of any new taxes. The noble Lord was opposed at the very first stage, and that opposition would be appreciated by the country. Let not hon. Gentlemen suppose that the present state of things could continue. With the increased enlightenment and information of the people, they would soon understand the principles which divided the two great parties. When they saw that one was the advocate of a liberal commercial policy, which would cheapen all the great necessities of life, they would not be slow to rally round that party. Hon. Gentleman opposite would be disappointed if they expected any great popularity from the course they were now taking. He would not trouble the House further, except to state that he gave his humble but most earnest thanks to the

noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) for the ability and earnestness with which he had expounded a scheme of the largest and most comprehensive commercial policy ever discussed in any legislature before, and to express his belief that in doing so the noble Lord had done more to give strength to his principles than he could by any compromise or concession whatever.

Mr. *Handley* said, he was anxious to seize the first opportunity of stating the course which a painful, but imperative sense of duty compelled him to pursue. The forms of the House, so essential to the regulation of its proceedings, were too often perverted to party purposes, and seized upon by Parliamentary tacticians to trim their sails so as to catch the popular gale. He (Mr. *Handley*) could have wished this question had been brought forward in a manner more convenient for discussion in that House, and more intelligible out of doors. He could not, however, disconnect the sugar duties from the other great interests embraced in the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer who had made the Timber Duties, the Sugar Duties, and the Corn-laws matters of financial arrangement. If however, he could have entertained a doubt on the subject, it had been removed by the straightforward course pursued by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, who had placed a resolution on the notice paper of the House, dealing with protective duties without distinction. But he had in his speech furnished him with a conclusive argument; for the noble Lord had asked him with what face could they address themselves to the Timber Duties, and the Sugar Duties, if they had shrunk from considering the great question of the Corn-laws? The converse of this proposition was also true; for how could he (Mr. *Handley*) give his consent to a proposal for diminishing the protection afforded to Canada, now so closely connected with us by the ties of sympathy for those emigrants who had left our shores at our instigation. How could he sacrifice the protection of the West-Indian planter, now struggling in the infancy of a new, a fearful, but glorious experiment, with the enormous wages paid to the emancipated labourer; and, when he came to the question of the Corn-laws, turn round, and exclaim, "Thus far shall thou go, but no further: you now touch upon hallowed ground?" But, to crown

the whole, the noble Lord had come forward with the monstrous and astounding proposition that our present protective duties on corn should be exchanged for the scale of fixed duties which he had announced. He (Mr. *Handley*) was fully persuaded that even the noble Lord had exceeded the fondest expectations even of the anti-Corn-law league, and that his proposals would carry terror and dismay throughout England, not only in agricultural districts, but wherever property was to be found. He (Mr. *Handley*) would not, on the present occasion be led into a discussion of the Corn-law question: indeed, he hoped that occasion would not speedily arise; but he would tell the noble Lord, emphatically and advisedly, on the part of his constituents and himself, that they would rather be without the semblance of protection at all than the fallacious one which the noble Lord had proposed. He repudiated the proposition—he altogether denounced the project and the scale. Let the noble Lord throw open the corn trade altogether; but let him at the same time throw open the gates of the Custom-house—let him abolish the Excise—and then let him ask the public creditor how he liked the exchange of security, from cultivated fields to a wide waste covered with a pauper population, and a revenue depending on the collateral security of mills and manufacturers. The position he was placed in was not of his own seeking: it was forced upon him by her Majesty's Government—by those with whom he had concurred in the great principles of their policy; and however painful it might be to vote against them he should have the consolation of having pursued the plain and honest course which his conscience dictated.

Mr. *James* said, that the speech of the noble Secretary for the Colonies was the finest and most statesmanlike speech he had heard for twenty years. He had no doubt, that the noble Lord opposite had brought forward this resolution with the expectation of catching the votes of all the philanthropists, and of all those more closely concerned with the West Indies. He happened to be one of those who had a personal and private interest in this matter, being a proprietor of a pretty extensive estate in the island of Jamaica. If the noble Lord opposite expected to get his vote on the present occasion he would be disappointed. He had never yet opposed

his private interest to the performance of his public duty, and he hoped he never should. They were now to choose between exercising humanity towards the black population of the West Indies, and exercising humanity towards the miserable, half-starved, white population at home. His vote would be given, as it always had been, to support the interests of our own population, in preference to those of the blacks, although, perhaps, he might feel a certain degree of regret that Government had been compelled to bring forward a proposition which might certainly have a tendency to make slavery and the slave-trade more profitable than ever.

Dr. Lushington said, circumstanced as I am, I think the House will naturally expect that I should feel it my duty to address a few observations to them; and, undoubtedly, I should have felt that obligation, even if my hon. Friend the Member for Lambeth had not taken upon himself the rather unusual course of forestalling the opinions and statements of a Member of this House, putting them in his own language—language which I altogether disclaim—and striving to cast upon them some degree of ridicule. To that I have been subject for many years, and I feel that it has not done me any injury, in my own opinion or in the opinion of others. With respect to the principle first stated by my hon. Friend, I shall persevere in its assertion, if the hon. Member meant this—that I have ever been the determined enemy of slavery, whether it assumed its most hateful form of the slave-trade which had ravaged the whole western world, involving the murder and bloodshed of thousands of our fellow-creatures, or other forms scarcely less detestable, as it existed in the West-India islands, and as it now exists in the Brazils, where human existence is at the lowest ebb of degraded misery: if the hon. Member meant this, that I have ever expressed my abhorrence of these practices, have ever been their determined opponent, as contrary to the laws of God and of man: if that were what the hon. Member meant, I shall ever stand by that principle, and the hon. Member states that which I claim as an honour, let who will, think it a subject of ridicule. “But,” said my hon. Friend, “what right have we to force our virtuous principles upon other states, to pass an act of uniformity for Spain and the Brazils, and whatever other countries may choose to carry on

these dreadful practices?” What right? Why, have we not declared these principles by an Act of Parliament in 1807? Have we not avowed them in Congress in 1815? Have not all the great States of Europe concurred in declaring that the slave-trade was contrary to the justice of man, and the law of God? Have we nothing more to say? Why we have treaties subsisting with every one of the great Powers upon this subject—treaties in which the Brazils are included. Indeed, I lament to say that almost all the treaties which have ever yet been made for the protection of suffering humanity in the case of the Africans—and it is one of the most extraordinary incidents in the history of the world—have been dealt with as though they were waste paper. We have gone to war for possessions which would not pay for their maintenance, and we have allowed treaties for the protection of the rights of humanity to be violated with scarcely a remonstrance. We have a right to the fulfilment of those treaties—we have a right to assert their principles—and the claim which we urge partakes neither of intolerance nor dictation. We have a right, and I say so, after attending to the observations of my hon. Friend, to take measures for the suppression of that which all Europe concurs in stigmatising as a crying wickedness and iniquity. I am aware, that in approaching the present discussion, it will be truly said, that we must take into consideration many great and important topics. I am aware of our financial difficulties—I am aware of our commercial difficulties. I am aware that the time may be coming when we shall have to encounter some embarrassments in dealing with foreign governments on commercial subjects. I forget none of these topics. I say them not out of my consideration, but speaking of one measure, and one only—the present proposal of her Majesty’s Government—I am prepared to say, that that measure will not remove the difficulties, will not relieve them from the embarrassments under which they now laboured, will lower them in the face of Europe, will degrade them in their own opinions, and will not receive the approval of the suffering people of this country. The measures proposed have reference to sugar, corn, and timber. I have ever been the friend of free trade, I have ever voted for an alteration in the Corn-laws, I maintain that opinion still. I have altered my sentiments with regard to the timber-duties; but I have always voted against every measure that tended to in-

crease the slave-trade or give it fresh vigour. I did so last year, and I am of the same opinion still. If any one had changed, I am not that one. I have not altered one iota of the opinions which I expressed on my hon. Friend, the Member for Wigan's motion last year. I see no reason to change these opinions now. It was then decided by an immense majority of the House against twenty-seven, that it would not be proper to reduce the duty upon foreign sugar to 34*s.* when the price was between 50*s.* and 60*s.*; and I see no reason to decide that it would be more proper to do it now when the price is from 37*s.* to 40*s.* At that time, when we expected that the price would increase, as it undoubtedly did, we did not think it necessary to provide against the contingency of a failure of the crop, and a very high price. Much less is there the slightest reason for making such provision now, when it is a matter of perfect demonstration that there will be an amply sufficient supply. I will state simply and plainly the grounds upon which I mean to vote, laying aside all party considerations, though I am as much attached to my party, I apprehend, as any living man, and mindful of their conduct with respect to these great questions in former time. I am anxious to repay them with all the fidelity that is consistent with honour

and duty. First, I oppose the Government upon this question, because it gives a stimulus to the slave-trade; secondly, because it will augment the horrors of the existing state of slavery: thirdly, because it is unjust to the West Indies; fourthly, because it is deleterious to the happiness of the emancipated population; fifthly, because it is not just with reference to the capitalists, who have engaged in the cultivation of sugar in the East Indies; and lastly, because I believe, that there exists no necessity whatever for taking the present course, in order to supply the people of England with sugar. To refer to the last topic first, leaving out of consideration the stock of sugar on hand, which amounts to about 35,000 tons, we have almost a moral certainty, we have at least a right to expect, a supply of 205,000 tons in the course of the year 1841. I speak from the most authentic documents when I estimate the supply from the East Indies 60,000, from the Mediterranean at 30,000 tons, and the remainder, namely, 115,000 tons from the West Indies. The actual existing state of importation affords the best data. I will state to the House the import of British sugar for the first four months of 1839, 1840, and 1841. The right hon. and learned Gentleman quoted the following document:—

STATEMENT for GREAT BRITAIN for the First Four Months of 1839, 1840, and 1841.

	IMPORTS.			HOME CONSUMPTION.			EXPORTS.			STOCK, 1st May.		
	1839.	1840.	1841.	1839.	1840.	1841.	1839.	1840.	1841.	1839.	1840.	1841.
Br. W. Indies, Tons.	19,500	18,300	17,500	35,700	41,100	24,000	..	..	..	21,300	9,200	14,000
Mauritius ..	12,500	12,200	17,500	7,800	11,600	12,000	..	..	..	9,000	6,100	8,500
Bengal ..	8,700	8,900	31,000	7,000	7,500	17,000	..	..	..	5,200	5,400	19,000
Total British ....	40,700	39,400	66,000	50,500	60,100	53,000	..	..	..	35,500	20,700	41,500
Total Foreign ....	3,800	6,700	14,000	..	..	..	3,800	7,600	11,500	10,500	14,000	23,500
Total Tons ..	44,500	46,100	80,000	50,500	60,100	53,000	3,800	7,600	..	46,000	34,700	70,000

Placing together the West Indies, Mauritius, and Bengal, it appears, that in 1839, the total quantity imported was 40,000 tons, in 1840, 37,400 tons, and in 1841, 66,000 tons. Thus, it appears, that in the present year, the produce is nearly double what it was last year. This is a strong and incontrovertible fact; I trusted it would be contradicted, if possible, but it is not possible either to contradict or refute. I hold in my hand a statement from a house of high character in Calcutta,

bearing date the 16th of January, 1841, with a postscript of the 13th of February, in which, after stating the actual export, it is remarked that—

“For the following year, it is scarcely possible to say what may come, if we have a favourable season for manufacturing, our prices will be maintained, unless the duties are altered at home, which we rather fear as far as other eastern sugars are concerned, and which are not the produce of slave labour.”

It is noticed there too, that the crop for

the present year is expected to be unusually large. Such is the state of the East Indies; let us now look to the West. In the first place, the unusual droughts have terminated at Guinea, and especially at Barbadoes, and in the great island of Jamaica; and, according to the ordinary range of human occurrences, we have no right to expect a repetition of the same calamity. Then peace pervades Jamaica, with an increase of industry; and we have a right to expect free, the fruits of that industry. I have a right to say so, looking to past experience, when, in the little island of Antigua—perhaps the most exhausted of all the islands which Britain possesses—since the abolition of slavery, the exports have increased from 7,000 to 11,000 hogheads. I see no reason to fear; if we allow a proper period of time to elapse, they will have in all quarters, the increased production which increased consumption would make necessary. In no one year has there ever been consumed more than 200,000 tons of sugar. I have shown you, that in the present year, you will have 205,000 tons, without regard to the stock on hand. The present price is about 37s., or as follows:—

	DUTY AMOUNT	PRICES TO CONSUMERS	
		per cwt.	per cwt.
BENGAL	4	25	4
WEST INDIA & MAURITIUS	25	50	50
MANILLA	41	58	58
BRAZIL	33	58	58
CUBA	49	58	58
SIAM	49	58	58
	28	55	55
	20	56	56
	24	58	58
	23	59	59
	33	62	62
	15	62	62
	19	56	56
	21	57	57
	25	61	61

	Proportion of Sugar in the East Indies
CUBA	62
BRAZIL	59
WEST INDIA	60
EAST INDIA	59

I ask you whether there is not every reasonable probability, that sugar will be supplied to the people of this country at a reasonable price. The English are great consumers of sugar, notwithstanding its high price. If any man will take the trouble of looking at the whole consumption of sugar through the western world,

he will find, that Great Britain takes about one-fourth of all that is consumed. Let us consider for a moment what will be the effect of admitting foreign sugar. I have been so fortunate as to obtain very recent advices from Cuba, as recent as up to the 1st of April, in this year. From two ports alone, the increase in exportation amount to no less than 9,500 tons; namely, from 24,200 tons, in 1840, to 33,700 tons, in 1841. The ports to which I allude, are Havannah and Matanzas. The right hon. and learned Gentleman referred to the following Table:—\*

How is that increase obtained? By an augmentation of slavery—by employing gangs of males only—by working them out without mercy, refusing them even the ordinary quantity of sleep necessary to sustain human nature. Every man's arm was there lifted against the slave, and the bitterest enmities are excited by this enormous infliction of evil. My hon. Friend has spoken of the advantages of free labour in India; can we institute any comparison between British India and these slave possessions? Has any one of the examples of indigo or cotton put by my hon. Friend any adaptation of the subject now under discussion? He has shown, that the productions of free labour in the East Indies surpass all the efforts of slavery. But my hon. Friend forgot, that in the East Indies the population is enormous in point of number, and the price of labour 1d. a-day, the lowest rate at which man can sustain life, while, in the West Indies, labourers are few, and the price of labour excessively high. I deny, however, that this is a question of free trade. In free trade, there is fair competition between parties who use the same means and appliances to attain the same end. But when have you heard of fair competition between the honest manufacturer and the man who robs on the high road?—between the man who pays just obedience to the laws of his country, and complies with all legal exactions, on the one hand, and the lawless smuggler on the other? Whoever heard of competition, where on one side murder is legalized, and on the other the sacred duties of humanity are reverentially recognised? It is no competition. The result is this; immediate prosperity to the lawless trafficker, and injury to the honest trader; while the ultimate conse-

\* See Table following page.



quences will be heavy indeed even for the wicked themselves. Humanely speaking, they are working their own ruin. In twenty, thirty, or forty years, as the case may be, they will reduce the finest land, that ever God gave to man to a howling wilderness. We have examples of this in the southern states of America. Mr. Joseph Gurney told me, that he had seen the land in every state of exhaustion, from being worked without rest or manure, reduced to an equality with the sands of the ocean, recovering after a lapse of twenty years, and by degrees, becoming partially restored—when, in every sense, made extinct by the abuse of man, revived by a benevolent process of nature, occupying a quarter of a century. But how will this scheme affect our own colonies? I am not at a loss for evidence. I will refer to the testimony of Mr. Joseph John Gurney, a gentleman who has no interest whatever in this question, of unsuspected character, and great practical knowledge. He travelled through the West Indies and the United States, for the express purpose of acquiring information; and of all the men whom I have ever known, he is the most attached to truth. I happen to have his sentiments in writing upon this subject, given to me before this question was mooted, and I will take the liberty of reading them to the House. The right hon. Gentleman read as follows:—

“I feel it to be of immense importance to the welfare of our West Indian colonies, and

to the cause of humanity, of our maintaining inviolate the present prohibitory scale of duties upon foreign slave-grown sugar. Were these duties to be relaxed, and put upon the same footing as other sugars, the growth of our own colonies, the inevitable consequence would be the ruin of the planters, the loss of daily wages to the liberated negroes, as a compensation for their labour on the establishment, and above all the vastly increased surplus of the Cuba and Brazilian slave-trade.”

This is the statement of one who has no West-Indian interest to influence his judgment; he had nothing but a sense of justice to guide him. A charge of inconsistency has been brought against those who oppose the present measure, because they consent to consume other articles, the produce of slave labour, and do not protest against the importation of slave grown cotton. I consider that that man gives the greatest proof of wisdom, and is the best friend of humanity, who looks to the practical execution of beneficial measures, and not that man who, not able to attain all the good of which he is desirous, gives up the good which is in his power. He is not a wise man who, because circumstances over which he has no control force him to submit to the evils of resorting to slave countries for certain products, should, because so great a calamity was inflicted on him, by the force of circumstances, take a course which would augment the evil he could not avoid. I have always endeavoured to attain all the practical good in my power throughout the discussion of

### COMPARATIVE TABLE OF THE EXPORTS OF SUGAR,

From 1st of JANUARY, to 31st MARCH, 1840 & 1841.

COUNTRIES.	SUGAR IN BOXES.			
	From HAVANA.		From MATANZAR.	
	1841	1840	1841	1840
England .. .. .	3621	1551	1651	1797
Cowes and a market .. .. .	8628	14482	7909	10543
Russia .. .. .	16987	1822	9193	1224
Sweden and Denmark .. .. .	....	220	....	....
Hamburg .. .. .	6415	19203	9288	11607
Bremen .. .. .	4565	5272	1310	1918
Holland .. .. .	4697	2394	....	....
Belgium .. .. .	4723	3526	....	3001
France { Havre and Bordeaux .. .. .	396	754	....	....
{ Marseilles .. .. .	5908	5533	2371	907
Spain .. .. .	21546	10001	5951	3787
Italy .. .. .	1119	1631	2911	....
New York .. .. .	12845	5165	8117	1178
Boston .. .. .	285 3	3087	10244	4202
Charleston, S. C. .. .. .	440	147	1958½	2290
New Orleans .. .. .	2270	2609	669	123
Mobile .. .. .	66	488	260	....
Other parts of the United States .. .. .	2366	1349	5196	899
Various .. .. .	676	619	1314	360
Total .. .. .	100127	77905	68342½	45486

this question. At first little progress was made, and I sat for years on the opposite benches scarcely expecting success, but I contented myself with working and hoping on, guided by public opinion, first of all bringing about the abolition of slavery—next procuring an amelioration in the condition of the negro—then by endeavouring to procure a gradual abolition of slavery—and at last, when public opinion was ripe, by the total abolition of slavery. The supporters of that measure were contented with the practical good they could effect, and had waited throughout for public opinion. There are some other matters well worthy of attention. I agree with the hon. Member for Beverley that Cuba sugar will enter into the greatest competition with British sugar, but I believe the Brazilian sugar will also find its way here, and that an encouragement will be given to the importation of slaves, and a great increase in the sufferings of the slaves will be the consequence. But are we quite sure that it will end there? Are we quite sure that the Brazilian government and the Brazilian planters will not be inclined to abandon the cultivation of cotton, which is now partially pursued, and take to the cultivation of sugar? See the course which was formerly pursued. In the West Indies the cultivation of cotton was abandoned, and the cultivation of sugar increased. How can we assure ourselves that it will be for the advantage of this country to depend exclusively for the supply of cotton upon the United States? Sir, I am of opinion that any measure which tend to render us solely and exclusively dependent upon the United States and to deprive us of the supply of that necessary article from other countries must be most detrimental to the commercial and mercantile interest of this country, and one of the most dangerous courses that England can adopt. I have listened with deep attention to the speech of my noble Friend, the Secretary for the Colonies, and cannot forget the pathetic description he gave of the sufferings of the poor of this country. I hope, Sir, that I am not deficient in the most earnest anxiety to relieve those sufferings, and to restore them to a better state. But when that eloquent description of their sufferings was given, and which will now go off to the country exciting their feelings and raising their passions—that description of their suffering from being forced to purchase a dear article may be contrasted

with the sufferings of the negroes, which must be the consequence of the adoption of this measure for the relief of our people. When I sat on the other side of the House, with but few friends to support me, actuated only by the spirit of truth, and when sometimes my courage failed me, I found the feelings of the people of this country rising to my support, encouraging every effort, and stimulating me to fresh exertions and fresh hopes; and I believe that, if the question were put to the people of this country, whether they would have their sugar cheaper by taking the produce of the labour of the slave, or whether they would suffer their present calamities, I believe they would reject the proposition with disdain. I have such faith in their principles and good feeling, that I believe they would prefer their dinner of herbs to the stalled ox that is offered to them by this measure. I have made these observations to justify myself, and to show my own consistency and adherence to my principle. I deeply regret being obliged to give a vote different from my noble Friend, but I am obliged, on this occasion, to separate from him. If the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer could be put in such a form that I could say no to it, I should be desirous to do so, and as far as the forms of this House would permit, that is the course I should pursue. With regard to the other questions, I will not enter into them. I only rose to vindicate my own opinions, and I am content.

Mr. *Hawes* begged to explain that he had certainly no intention to throw ridicule upon the opinions of his right hon. Friend, and if his words were susceptible of any such interpretation, it was contrary to his wish.

Debate adjourned.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE.] On the motion that the Report on the Criminal Justice Bill be brought up,

Sir *C. Douglas* moved to insert the following clause:—

“And whereas, by reason of the granting of charters of incorporation to the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses, of the borough of Birmingham, in the county of Warwick, and to the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the boroughs of Manchester and Bolton, in the county of Lancaster, and of a grant of a separate Court of Sessions to each of the same boroughs, the coroner for the county of Warwick, acting within the hundred of Hemlingford, and the coronor for the county of Lan-

caster, acting within the hundred of Salford, have been deprived of the fees and emoluments arising from their offices within the said boroughs respectively, and it is just that compensation be therefore made to them in like manner as if they had been officers of a borough or county before the passing of the said act of the sixth year of his late Majesty who were removed from their offices under the provisions of that act: be it therefore enacted, that the said coroners shall respectively be entitled to have an adequate compensation, to be paid out of the borough fund of the said boroughs of Birmingham, Manchester, and Bolton, respectively, for the fees and emoluments of their said offices arising within the said boroughs, and from the date of the grants of such separate Courts of Sessions; and that all the provisions of the said act of the sixth year of the reign of his late Majesty relating to the claim of any corporate officer for compensation on account of being removed from his office, and to the manner of determining and securing the amount of such compensation, shall apply to the said coroners; provided always, that the statements to be delivered to the town council by the said coroners shall set forth the fees and emoluments in respect whereof they shall claim compensation, during five years next preceding the grants of the separate Courts of Sessions to the said boroughs of Birmingham, Manchester, and Bolton, respectively; and that in estimating the amount of such compensation the said coroners shall be deemed to have held their offices for the term of life."

Mr. M. Philips said, that finding the hon. Baronet would not omit the word "Manchester" from the clause, he felt bound to oppose it altogether.

The House divided on the question that the clause be read a second time: Ayes 54; Noes 4: Majority 50.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Acland, Sir T. D.	Hawes, B.
Antrobus, E.	Hinde, J. H.
Bateson, Sir R.	Horsman, E.
Bentinck, Lord G.	Howard, hn. C. W. G.
Blackburne, I.	Hughes, W. B.
Burroughes, H. N.	Hutton, R.
Campbell, Sir J.	Inglis, Sir R. H.
Clerk, Sir G.	Jackson, Mr. Serjeant
Collier, J.	Kemble, H.
Dalrymple, Sir A.	Litton, E.
Darby, G.	Mildmay, P. St. J.
Drummond, H. H.	Monypenny, T. G.
Eaton, R. J.	Mordaunt, Sir J.
Egerton, Lord F.	Morpeth, Viscount
Follett, Sir W.	Nicholl, J.
Gordon, R.	Packe, C. W.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.	Peel, right hon. Sir R.
Greene, T.	Perceval, Colonel
Grey, rt. hon. Sir C.	Pigot, right hon. D.
Hastie, A.	Plumptre, J. P.

Polhill, F.  
Pringle, A.  
Pryme, G.  
Rae, right hon. Sir W.  
Roche, W.  
Rutherford, rt. hn. A.  
Shaw, right hon. F.  
Sibthorp, Colonel  
Somers, J. P.

Stanley, hon. E. J.  
Talbot, C. R. M.  
Talfourd, Mr. Serj.  
Wilbraham, hon. B.  
Williams, W.

#### TELLERS.

Douglas, Sir C. E.  
Freemantle, Sir T.

#### *List of the NOES.*

Aglionby, H. A.  
Brotherton, J.  
Marsland, H.  
Thornely, T.

#### TELLERS.

Phillips, M.  
Greg, R. H.

Clause inserted—report agreed to.

### HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday, May 10, 1841.*

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Arms (Ireland); Slave Compensation.—Read a third time:—Lease and Release; Law of Felony Explanation.

Petitions presented. By Lord Hatherton, and the Bishop of Durham, from Merchants, and others, and from Durham, against Sunday Travelling on Railways and Canals.—By the Dukes of Buccleugh and Buckingham, and Lord Redesdale, from Melrose, Jedburgh, Harwich, and several other places, against Alterations of the Corn-laws.—By the Earls of Ripon, and Albemarle, and Lord Hatherton, from the New Cut, Lambeth, the Performers at the English Opera House, and from Newington Causeway, for the Abolition of the Tolls on the Bridges.—By the Earl of Lovelace, from Newry, for the Jews Declaration Bill.—By the Earls of Lovelace, Fitzwilliam, and Mole, from Newry, Yorkshire, and Dartmouth, for the Abolition of Church Rates.

SIR R. STOPFORD—SYRIA.] The Lord Chancellor stated to their Lordships, that he had received a letter from Admiral Sir Robert Stopford, returning his thanks for the resolution approving of his conduct, and that of the officers and men under his command, with reference to the recent proceedings on the coast of Syria, to which their Lordships had agreed in February last. The noble and learned Lord read the letter, in which the gallant admiral said—

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter, communicating to me the resolution of thanks agreed to by the House of Lords on the 4th of February last, and intimating also their Lordship's desire that I should make known the same to the several officers under my command, and to those acting in co-operation with her Majesty's navy in the service on the coast of Syria. This I have accordingly done, and those to whom I communicated their Lordship's resolution feel equally with myself the highest gratification at the distinguished honour which has been conferred on them."

Letter to be entered on the journals.

CORN LAWS.] The Earl of Rosebery rose for the purpose of moving for certain returns with a view of showing the operation of the existing Corn-laws. It had been stated by certain noble Lords that the present duty was merely for the purpose of regulation, and its operation had been contrasted, he thought, somewhat invidiously with the operation of a fixed duty. Great misapprehension appeared to exist on the subject of the operation of the present Corn-laws. It had been stated that they imposed no tax on food, while the fixed duty on corn, which had been proposed in another House, had been stigmatised as imposing a tax on the food of the people. For the purpose, therefore, of affording information on this important subject, he moved that there be laid before the House an account of the quantity of wheat and other grain entered for home consumption, from foreign countries, during the years 1838, 1839, and 1840, with the amount of duty paid thereon each year respectively.

Earl Fitzwilliam said that he considered the returns moved for by his noble Friend were of great importance, and that they were calculated to do away with great misapprehension. Great delusions existed on the subject among both parties, but more particularly, he would say, among that which, for want of a better name, had been designated the agricultural party. If any noble Lord were then present who had been present on Friday last, he would recollect that he (Earl Fitzwilliam) had expressed his opinion that the tenants who were now paying a fair rent, as deduced from the averages of the last ten, fifteen, or twenty years, would be able fairly to pay an equal rent during the same term now commencing, under the operation of a fixed duty, as proposed in the other House of Parliament. Since that period he had endeavoured to procure facts in support of his opinion from a consideration of the averages during the period he had mentioned. He had been unable to procure the averages for the last two years; but from the year 1820 to the year 1838 the average of the averages had amounted to 56s. 4d.; and supposing during the last two years the average to amount to 70s., which he considered would turn out to be about the truth, it would make but a small addition to the amount he had mentioned. The effect produced by the existing Corn-laws

was very singular, because, while during a time of distress and scarcity they raised the price of corn considerably, during a time of abundance they depressed the prices in an equal degree, thus inflicting a positive evil upon the farmer, and forcing him, during those seasons, to accept of a lower price than he would otherwise be enabled to procure. They afforded another example of the inability of human ingenuity to adapt a plan to circumstances which it was impossible for human foresight to foresee. He had said that under the proposed system the tenant would be able to pay as good a rent for the next twenty years as he had been fairly able to pay under the old law. A great portion of the lands of England were held by tenants at will, and the landlords took the time which was most favourable to them for fixing their rents; and the object of the Corn-laws was to persuade the tenants that they should have as high an average of prices as that of the period at which the rent was fixed. The law, he conceived, had been mischievous to all parties, but most particularly so as to the occupying tenant.

Lord Beaumont hoped their Lordships would allow him to claim their attention for a few moments. He would not have ventured to address them, had he not feared that his silence might be interpreted as an acquiescence in the sentiments of the noble Earl. He was aware of the great disadvantage of discussing a question of such importance in this incidental manner, and, therefore, he would not enter into the subject at large. The noble Earl seemed to conclude, that this was a question between the great landed proprietors and the community at large; but it also affected, in a very serious manner, individuals who cultivated their own land, who lived on their own land, and who subsisted by the profits which they derived from their labour and outlay. If the present price were lowered beneath the average which the noble Earl had mentioned—nay, if it were not considerably above it, this class of persons would not be able to cultivate their land. This was especially the case with reference to poor land. These who had brought such land into cultivation calculated on the present protection being continued to them, in order that they might receive some remuneration for their outlay. Fully relying on the good faith of the Legislature to give

them due protection, they had disbursed their money. What, then, would be the case with those who cultivated poor lands if the proposed alteration were effected? Why, when these persons found that the law was to be altered, and their wheat driven out of the market by foreign grain, they would be obliged to abandon their land, and many tracts, he was convinced, would speedily go out of cultivation. The agricultural population thus thrown out of employ would, of necessity, proceed to the manufacturing towns, increase the competition for employment there, and consequently effect a reduction of wages, for the alteration of the Corn-laws meant nothing else but a reduction of wages. It meant that, or it meant nothing. Even supposing that employment could be procured, it would be a very hard case on those persons who had all their lives been accustomed to agricultural pursuits. Their want of skill in their new vocation would prevent them from claiming large wages. The proposed alteration would also operate most injuriously with reference to those who had raised money by mortgage. But it was said, that such an alteration would be attended with a great extension of our manufacturing exports. But could they make laws for all the countries of Europe? Could they compel foreign states to purchase British manufactures? They might make laws for this country, but they could not foresee what duties foreign countries might lay on the importation of British manufactures; and they all knew that some countries had already imposed heavy duties on these manufactures. It could not be supposed that foreign countries, which had given encouragement to the growth of home manufactures, would allow this country to undersell them in their own markets, and thus bring ruin on those manufacturers whose exertions they had previously fostered. Assuredly they would not adopt a system that must impoverish their population, and thus greatly embarrass their respective Governments.

Lord *Ashburton* said, the noble Earl had stated that for a period of eighteen years, the average price of corn was 56s. 4d. the quarter. Now, that was just about the limit which entered the mind of those who had supported the present Corn-laws. For his own part, he never wished to see corn below 55s. or above 60s. the quarter. So far from the fluc-

tuations, under the present system, being very great, it had, on the contrary, produced a very remarkable degree of steadiness of price. With respect to the noble Earl's observations about landlords and their tenants, he thought their Lordships must have made up their minds that the noble Earl was mistaken. It was desirable that every landlord should have respectable tenants; which made it absurd to suppose that any man, except in extraordinary cases, would think he could permanently derive advantage from tricking and trapping his tenants. He should not, however, trouble their Lordships with any further observations on the subject, until it came more directly under their notice.

The Earl of *Radnor* concurred in what had fallen from his noble Friend below him (Earl Fitzwilliam). The Corn-laws had produced fluctuation in the price of corn, which was the article of all others the least liable to fluctuation of price in the natural order of things.

Lord *Ashburton* explained. That in the course of the twenty-five years which had passed since those laws were enacted, the price had been remarkably steady, except in the two years to which he had referred.

Lord *Portman* said, that when the noble Lord (*Ashburton*) spoke of the steadiness of price he seemed not to have looked into the returns, in which it would be found that there had been first seven years of an ascending scale, then seven years of a descending scale. We were in the commencement of the descending scale. In the course of that period wheat had risen to 90s., and sunk below 40s. He believed that the supply of wheat grown in England was not sufficient to meet the demands of the people. There were about twenty millions of acres of arable land in this country, and the population exceeded seventeen millions, and it was reckoned that each individual consumed one quarter of wheat a year. So there was a demand for seventeen millions of quarters. Now, each acre was said to produce about three quarters and a half of wheat, and if this sum were divided by four—for the four-course system might be taken as an average—there would remain only a surplus of half a million. So a supply from foreign countries was, considering the great increase of population, in the long run of years necessary. This was a point on which the whole question, in his opinion,

turned, and at the same time it was one, too, generally overlooked.

Lord *Ashburton* begged entirely to disagree with the noble Lord as to the means of production in this country. From the improvements daily made in agriculture—the supply would continue to increase, and would be sufficient to meet the demands of a growing population.

The Earl of *Haddington* wished to throw out a suggestion to the noble Lord (Lord Portman) as to the calculation which he had made respecting the means of supply. He had entirely excluded Scotland and Ireland—both of which countries produced more corn than they consumed, and the surplus came to this country.

The Earl of *Radnor* could assure their Lordships, that Ireland was gradually decreasing in her supply of corn; and as for Scotland, she had ceased for some time to be an exporting, and had become an importing, country.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, it appeared to him from the returns that had been laid on the Table, that in order to meet the demand for this country recourse must be had to foreign supplies. It would, of course, be in the recollection of such noble Lords as looked at the evidence given before committees on the subject of the Corn-laws, that amongst them there was an extraordinary degree of unanimity as to the price which the grower expected, and had a right to expect, under the law of 1828. They agreed that that price was 64s. In the year 1829, the price was 66s. 3d., and in the year 1831, it was 66s. 4d. But what was the present price—he did not speak strictly of the averages as published—but what was the actual price of corn fit for making bread? Why, for the last sixteen or seventeen months, it was not less than 90s. Such was the effect of the existing system, the arrangements under which prevented the bringing in of foreign corn when it was most wanted, and only gave facilities to its introduction when it was not required. Now, there was one point to which he wished that some noble Lords would apply themselves, namely, to explain how it was that the prices of grain at Rotterdam were so steady; for his part, he could only explain it by the fact that the Dutch enjoyed a free trade in corn.

The Earl of *Wichlow* said, that though there had been a decrease in the export of corn from Ireland, still the export was of

sufficient amount to require that it should be included in any calculation made upon the subject. However true it was that the export of corn from Ireland had decreased, the export of flour had greatly increased. Vast mills had been recently built in Ireland, and if the corn did not come to this country in one shape, it came in another. Then it was to be recollected that Canada supplied to this country a great quantity of corn, and were our colonial interests to be sacrificed for the sake of such an experiment as the proposed alteration of the Corn-laws?

Motion agreed to.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, May 10, 1841.*

*MISCELLANEOUS.]* Bills. Read a third time:—Criminal Justice: Turnpike Roads and Highways.

*Petitions presented.* By the Attorney-general, Sir George Strickland, Mr. Easthope, Mr. Wilbraham, Mr. Grote, Mr. G. Wood, Mr. E. Buller, and other hon. Members, from Edinburgh, Blackfriars, Westbury, Southwark, Kendal, Manchester, Chester, and many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. G. Palmer, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Fellows, and others, from Parishes in Essex, from Lancaster, and other places, for the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Thornely, Mr. Chalmers, Viscount Sandon, and others, from Wolverhampton, Hilton, Liverpool, and other places, for a Reduction of the Sugar Duties.—By Mr. O'Connell, from Dublin, deprecating the change in the Timber Duties.—By Mr. Grimditch, from Macclesfield, for Church Extension.—By Mr. Milnes, from Coventry, for the Continuance of the Gilbert Act.—By Mr. Thornely, from a Baptist Congregation in Staffordshire, for the Abolition of Church Rates, and the Release of Wm. Beames.

*ORANGEMEN (CANADA).]* Mr. O'Connell wished to know from the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, whether he had received any despatches relative to a murder, which, it appeared, was committed by persons armed with muskets, who fired out on some individuals from an Orange lodge at Toronto?

Lord *J. Russell* said, Government had received some despatches, but he expected further intelligence every day.

*CATHOLIC SOLDIERS (INDIA).]* Mr. O'Connell was desirous of knowing whether the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary-at-War, had received any communication from the East-India Company with respect to the spiritual wants and instructions of Roman Catholic soldiers in India, and whether the right hon. Gentleman had any hopes of procuring a remedy for the evils complained of on this subject?

Mr. *Macaulay* assured the hon. and

learned Gentleman, that the President of the Board of Control was doing everything to promote the spiritual accommodation of the Roman Catholic soldiers in India.

**SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS—ADJOURNED DEBATE.]** Mr. *Ewart* resumed the debate, and said, that this question was looked upon by some as a subject of party struggle, and that the measures introduced by her Majesty's Government were attributed, not to financial considerations, but to political motives. He looked to results and not to motives. One thing only would he state, that when, last year, he brought this very question forward, he did understand it to be the intention of the President of the Board of Trade to submit to the pressure of the existing monopoly for one year and no longer. For his part, however, he felt, that the people of this country would not enter into such questions, but that they would judge of the measures upon their merits. They would merely ask whether the measures were conducive or not to the prosperity of the country. He was sure, at least, that that was the only consideration which would have any weight in that great commercial district with which it was his lot to be more particularly acquainted, a region of gigantic manufacture, unequalled in the history of the world, which extended itself from South Lancashire over Western Yorkshire, and linked together by one vast chain of manufactures, the Irish Sea and the German Ocean. He believed, that the alterations contemplated by the Government would be gladly hailed by the manufacturers of that most important district of the empire, and that they would not attend to any insinuations as to the motives of Ministers which might emanate from the other side of the House. But they would enquire by what means hon. Gentlemen opposite would meet the deficiency in the revenue, which they were the first to reprobate. He should like to know what they had to substitute for the measure before the House. Were they prepared to substitute for it a tax upon property? If not, how did they propose to pay the interest on our enormous debt, or to satisfy the commercial wants of the country? The country expected to hear from them, or from their leader, some statement of the measures by which they were prepared to meet the emergency, and to protect the country in a crisis

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which they had so vividly described. There was one circumstance in the course of the debate which hon. Members had not adverted to, namely, that the Government had drawn a clear distinction between sugar the production of slave labour, and that produced by free labour, having imposed upon the former a duty of 42s., but on the latter a duty of only 36s. It was right to call the attention of the country to this distinction. He regretted to find himself opposed, on this occasion, to his hon. Friend the Member for Beverley. He had had the honour, with the hon. Member for Beverley, to stand up, through many a long debate, against the system of West-India monopoly and in claiming the right of equal duties for the continent of India. Since that period a change had come over the spirit of his hon. Friend; he was suddenly converted; he had formed a new alliance; and was now an ardent supporter of the monopolising proposition of the noble Lord (Lord Sandon). With him and the West Indians he joined in the constant cry of "Protection, protection, protection," a cry, in his opinion, utterly at variance with the interests of the public, and not deserving to be responded to by a majority of that House. Thirty or forty years ago a similar exclamation was raised on the part of the West-Indian interest, when it was proposed to admit foreign cotton into the markets of Great Britain. About the year 1784 American cotton was almost unknown in this country; and it was a singular fact that the Custom-House officers of Liverpool refused to admit the first cargo of cotton which came from the United States, from an idea that in that country it could not be produced. Had the attempt to impose a prohibitory duty on cotton, which was then made succeeded, where would have been that colossal fabric, our cotton manufacture, at once the wonder and the envy of the world? He appealed to them in behalf of the consumers of this country to extend to sugar the same principle, which fortunately for the interests of the country, had been applied to cotton, in the assurance that as in the one case it was for the interest of the country that the protection should be withdrawn from cotton, it was for the interest of the country, equally in principle if not in degree, that it should be withdrawn from sugar. But, if protection was to be conceded in the present instance, he begged to ask the noble Lord and those who thought with him, how long it was meant that that protection

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should endure? So far from thinking that it ought to last, he believed that the longer they delayed an approximation towards an equality of duties, the worse would it be for the interest of the colonies themselves. If they continued to foster and pamper these interests they would never be able to endure a wholesome exposure to the invigorating atmosphere of commercial freedom. The longer they maintained those monopolies, the less would those monopolies be able to meet a vigorous opposition from the general commerce of the world. But not only did the West-India interests seek to maintain their monopoly; they were now assailed also on the part of the East-Indian interests. He earnestly hoped, that, as the commercial part of the country, was resisting the continuance of the West-Indian monopoly, it would still more resist the colossal monopoly attempted to be imposed on the part of the East Indies. If not, the commercial energies of the country would be depressed by a weight which it would never be able to get rid of. He protested against the statement that any such compact for protection was ever made on behalf of India. There never even had been any such understanding. The arguments against the proposal of the Government were confined to three points—First, that the import of sugar would be sufficient for the demands of the country, even continuing the present system of monopoly; next, that the revenue proposed to be raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be insufficient; and, lastly, they endeavoured to show that the price, under the existing system of protection, would be sufficiently low to meet the wants of the consumer. 110,000 tons was the quantity of sugar that was expected from the West Indies; the West Indians themselves calculated it at 115,000 tons; but he had been informed, upon good authority, that the former calculation was the more correct one. In Demerara the falling-off had been considerable, and from the Mauritius no more was to be expected than last year. They had no right to take into consideration the stock on hand, since there must always be a certain quantity to work on. It was calculated that we could get 56,000 tons from the East Indies; add to this 28,000 tons as the amount of our import from the Mauritius, we should have a total of 194,000 tons; which was no more than the quantity we imported twelve years ago, although the population had in-

creased, according to the lowest calculation, at least fifteen per cent. Next to the supply came the question of revenue. It was clear that there ought to be a much larger consumption of sugar now than there was twelve years ago, owing to the increase of population; that increased consumption he calculated to be 29,000 tons, and this ought certainly to give an additional revenue of one million. The third consideration was the price. According to the calculations in his possession, the price would range from 56s. to 60s. The price of brown Brazil sugar was 20s., to which add the duty of 36s., and 2s., extra charge, would bring it to 58s. He would not say that sugar would, at this price, be so low as it ought. He was anxious, for the good both of the consumers and merchants, that the duty on sugar should be reduced as low as possible. He was willing to advocate a reduction of the duty on colonial sugar, and had always said that he would give to the colonists these three advantages:—First, a reduction of the duty; secondly, immigration and its consequence, the means of obtaining free labour; and last and best of all, the advantage of free competition. A great policy was involved in the change proposed. By a liberal reduction of duties, Great Britain would become the entrepôt of the sugar of the world. This was her natural position. This should be the general aim of our commercial policy. The ports of this country, not the ports of the continent, would, under a sound fiscal system, be the sugar markets of the world; as they might be the markets for every other article, under the influence of our capital and commerce. Another great question ought also to be considered. He meant the future commerce of Brazil. Brazil was a country of the most gigantic resources, which might be hereafter developed to the great and lasting advantage of this country; and he trusted that whatever might be the result of the present debate, the time would come when that vast and fertile region would be opened to the people of Great Britain. He was aware that on the present occasion they would have to encounter the interested opposition, not only of the West-Indian and East-Indian bodies, but that they would also have to struggle with the far more formidable phantom of an anti-slavery opposition. He had always been anxious, when the question of the sugar duties was before the House, to draw, if possible, some distinc-



tion favourable to free labour and adverse to slave labour. The most mature reflection, however, had convinced him that such a distinction was impossible. He did not believe that any nation could act on such a principle. It was a principle for individual agency. The international commerce of the world should go on, whatever might be the nature of individual opinions. Individuals would, and had a perfect right to, refuse from conscientious motives, to use articles which were the produce of a certain species of labour; but such reasoning could not be applied to nations. He also entertained the firmest conviction that, if free labour were admitted into fair competition with slave labour, it would vanquish it in any market in the world. On that point he held the same opinions as Mr. Gurney and Sir Fowell Buxton. The evidence before the West-India committee of last Session, showed clearly that the voluntary labour of one free man was worth that of two of the most able-bodied slaves. That conviction was gaining ground even in Brazil and Cuba. In Brazil there existed a strong party adverse to slavery, while in Cuba the Patriotic Society of Havannah was working for its discouragement. Mr. Turnbull, in his recent work on Cuba, stated, that that society began by laying it down "as an incontrovertible principle, that the labour of a single free-man who works voluntarily, and for his own interest, is at least equivalent to all that can be extracted from any two of the most robust of the African race." The only radical cure for slavery was, the free commercial intercourse of nations. Commerce was the great emancipator. The slave-trade had not been put down by gun-boats; nor would slavery be suppressed by the warfare of prohibitory duties. Had we refused to admit American cotton into this country, the effect would have been to perpetuate slavery in that part of the world. America, confined within herself would have continued the system without a chance of mitigation. But what had been the effect of our commercial intercourse with that nation? A strong anti-slavery party was rising up in America, and shaking to its basis that great confederation. Commerce would work beneficially in Brazil. The proposed reduction of the duties would enable them to make arrangements for the extinction of slavery there also. If this country met Brazil liberally; and with a disposition to take a fair portion of her natural products on equitable terms, he

(Mr. Ewart) had no doubt that a corresponding liberality would be evinced by that empire with respect to slavery. The benefits of the proposition before the House would be felt by all classes, and more especially by the poorer classes, in this country; and he (Mr. Ewart) was as anxious to put an end to distress in those quarters as he was to put an end to slavery in any quarter. His right hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets, in his vigorous declamation against slavery the other night, seemed to forget the distresses of the poor of his own country. He left them to Providence. He resembled the good bishop described by Pope:—

"God cannot love, quoth Bond, with tearless eyes,

The wretch he starves, and piously denies ;

But the mild bishop, with a serious air,

Resigns, and leaves them Providence's care."

He (Mr. Ewart) was as ardent an enemy to slavery as any one, even as his right hon. Friend, but in his enthusiasm in that cause he could not forget the claims of the poor of this country. The adulteration of sugar had gone on to an extraordinary extent, on account of its high price. People abandoned the use of it in consequence. He knew as a fact—not unknown, perhaps, to his noble Friend the Member for Liverpool—that an association was formed in Liverpool for the purpose of avoiding the use of sugar. His right hon. Friend (Dr. Lushington) announced that the people of England would not submit to the use of slave-labour sugar, whilst any other was to be procured. Whence did his right hon. Friend derive his authority as plenipotentiary of the people of England? His right hon. Friend even went so far as to say, in scriptural language, that they would prefer a dinner of herbs to the stalled ox of slavery. But under the present scheme of duties, the poor not the rich, would suffer. The rich, who could pay, would still have the stalled ox. The dinner of herbs would be the lot of the poor only. Surely if the duties were to be reduced at all, that was now—when commerce was depressed, and did not show its usual elasticity in spring—when our manufacturers were working only half time, our commercial towns languishing, and the poor suffering from unusual privation. The cotton trade was in a most declining state; so, likewise, was every other trade connected with the export commerce of the country. The distress affected all classes. It was felt in London as well as in the pro-

vinces. Something must be done to revive commerce and relieve distress. Nor was the proposed commercial reform demanded by distress only; it was called for by the improved habits of the people. There could not be a more accurate test of those improved habits than the evidence given before the committee on the import duties last year. Twenty-four years ago, scarcely one coffee-house (exclusively for the sale of coffee) existed in London. The coffee-houses now amounted to 1,600 or 1,800. They supplied the people with an immense amount of periodical journals and newspapers. The reduction of the duties on sugar and coffee was therefore a moral question of great importance. Were these habits of sobriety, this change in the character of the working population to be checked by continuing the present high duties on sugar? But the question at issue involved even more extensive considerations. It involved the consideration of the general increase of the commerce of the country. Foreign countries were gradually becoming more convinced of the extension given to commerce by a reduction of duties on foreign produce. Among these was France. The French Minister of Commerce, M. Cunin Gridaine, had lately shown in his Report laid before the Chamber of Peers, the benefit which has resulted from reducing the import duties of France. In consequence of this reduction it appeared that the general trade of France had increased from 616,000,000 francs in 1829, to 947,000,000 francs in 1839. Her exports, which, in 1829, were only 604,000,000 francs, increased in 1839 to 1,003,000,000 francs; her imports of foreign produce, which, in 1829, were valued at 483,000,000 francs, rose in 1839 to 650,000,000 francs. Navigation, domestic produce, cotton, iron, coal, partook of this general improvement. He (Mr. Ewart) believed that a new era was disclosing itself in the commerce of the world. In this great commercial change Great Britain should take the lead. He strongly felt that this position was due to the honour as well as to the interests of this country. If we sunk back into the old system of mercantile restriction, we should fall like Holland, into a state of early decrepitude and premature decay. But if, in accordance with the times in which it is our destiny to live, we freely open our commerce at home and abroad, he saw no limits to its extent and duration.

"Nec cursum oceano, neque famam, terminat astris."

Mr. Heathcote said, that he was anxious to state to the House the reasons which would govern his vote upon the present occasion, but he could not, in the first instance, help remarking, that from the course which the debate had taken, whether owing to party tactics or to the forms of the House, it would be ill understood in the country. At the same time two separate debates were going on, one incident to the announcement made by his noble Friend, the Secretary for the Colonies, on the subject of the Corn-laws, and the other solely relating to the resolution on the sugar duties, and the proposals as to corn, timber, and sugar, which was immediately before the House, and upon which his noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool, had confined himself to a dry defence of those duties. He hoped the House would allow him to say a few words on the larger question. The noble Lord was now taking the first step in a long course, he was now proposing the first of a series of measures, all intimately connected with each other, and which deeply affected not only the interests of the colonies and of agriculture, but, in his belief, were calculated to be seriously prejudicial to the manufacturing interests also. On the first subject, that of corn, he did not think, often as he had in that House represented the strong feelings on that subject, that he ever knew a more determined feeling of resistance to exist than existed at the present to the proposition of the noble Lord. It was a feeling in which all ranks and conditions of men shared, and persons of every shade of political feeling. Those who represented the agricultural interests ought at once boldly to say, "We will hear and accept of no compromise—we will not accept the proposition of the noble Lord," for he believed, that a fixed duty the agriculturists were generally determined to resist; and as to the fixed duty of 8s., he could not persuade himself that the noble Lord seriously meant to propose it to the House. His hon. Colleague had said, that he would rather have no duty than such a duty as that. He trusted that the agricultural interest would never be put to so painful an alternative, and he believed that he might give them the information that there was not the slightest chance of such a proposition being carried. So much for protection. Now, as to the question of revenue. In the first place, the pro-

position could not surely be brought forward for that purpose, because the noble Lord must have been fully aware that he could not carry it. Could the proposed duty be permanently maintained? If a scarcity occurred, and if they had to depend on a foreign supply, they might soon see a scarcity; could it be maintained? The measure would produce this complication of evils—a scarcity of corn in the country, and at the same time a defalcation in the revenue. Let them look to the extent of revenue which was to be derived from the Corn-laws, and he asked whether it was safe to make nearly two millions of revenue depend upon a proposition of this kind? The argument which had been used by hon. Members was this, that, though they didn't expect to carry the proposition now, it was something to be done at a future period, but he joined issue with them at once, for he could not see why, as long as the Legislature retained its character for intelligence, and its regard for the interests of the community, that proposition should ever be carried—why that which was unjust to-day should be considered just to-morrow. They took their ground upon the principle that the Corn-laws were sanctioned by justice and even necessity. These were matters of opinion, but he might say, it was matter of fact, that they were in unison with the opinions of a large majority of the constituencies of this country. As to the timber duties, he was far from saying, that if any interest had an excessive protection he was not prepared to take it away; but he asked the House to consider the time at which this proposal was brought forward, and the condition of our North American possessions. Was it not likely to excite that disaffection which had as yet scarcely subsided, and was it giving that reward which they deserved to the loyal inhabitants of those colonies who had succeeded in suppressing disaffection? As to the shipping interest, he owed it great gratitude for the confidence which it had reposed in him, and he contended, that they could not maintain the navy of this country without a great commercial marine. Strength was better than wealth, and a race of bold hardy seamen, ready to fight the battles of their country, was a priceless treasure, far beyond the value of the uncertain advantages anticipated by the noble Lord. In reference to the sugar duties he would

say but a word. A great and costly, but a most glorious experiment had been tried in our West-India colonies. He was rejoiced to hear from the statement of the noble Lord of the success of that experiment, but was it the time when that experiment was going on, and was likely to lead to a successful issue, to try a theoretical experiment of this nature? The noble Lord had said, that it would not be manly in him to attack the sugar and timber interests without attacking the landed interest at the same time, and he thought that they might take a lesson from that noble Lord, and that it equally behoved them to say, "We will not defend the land whilst we throw overboard the other interests likely to be prejudiced by the scheme of the Government." He was compelled, therefore, with great pain and reluctance to declare, that he felt it to be his duty to vote against the resolutions. Hon. Gentleman talked about the protection to agriculture. Had not the manufacturing interests equal, and in many instances far greater protection. Let them look at the woollen, and the silk and linen trades, had not they immense and enormous protection? Within ten years enormous bounties had been given, and then, armed to the teeth with protection, they came forward and said, "We wish protection for ourselves, and free trade for every one else;" but he said, if they wished to reform others, they should begin by reforming themselves. Let them not content themselves with making vague declarations, but put notices down on the motion-book of that House. [*"Hear! hear!"* from Mr. Hume.] Oh! no, not vague declarations; he knew that the hon. Member for Kilkenny would promise a great deal—he knew his promises of old. The hon. Member for Wigan had said, that it was now necessary for this country to set a great example. It might be very well for this country to set an example but would foreign countries follow it? We might give up our agriculture, our colonies, our shipping, but would they give up their rising manufactures? He was not for giving up a substance for the sake of a shadow. He therefore was bound to vote against the resolutions; he regretted the necessity for that step, but in announcing his intention he hoped that he had said nothing indicating any diminution of respect for the personal character of the noble Lord. The resolutions had

been brought by the noble Lord in a bold and manly speech, which did him great credit, but he could not accede to them, for he was satisfied, that if they were carried it would be impossible to maintain the agricultural, colonial, shipping, or even the manufacturing interests of this great country.

Mr. *Lascelles* thought the debate and the vote would be considered as embracing the whole principle of removal of restrictions from the trade and commerce of the country, and he was decidedly favourable to that principle. He could not, at the same time, conceal from himself the difficulties which the Government had created, by bringing forward the subject under the circumstances in which they were placed. He did not, indeed, join in the imputation that had been cast upon Ministers for making this a party manoeuvre, but at the same time he did think that having been defeated upon other questions, and the reins of Government having dropped from their hands, they ought to have paused before they threw measures before the country, which necessarily excited much of passion and hostility between the different interests—when they were unable to carry them out. They had no right to consider themselves the exclusive advocates of free trade, and he had stated, on the vote of confidence, two years ago, that he had the most confident expectation that his right hon. Friend (Sir. R. Peel) would carry out, as far as he could the principles of Mr. Huskisson. Although such a thing could scarcely be expected by hon. Gentlemen opposite, yet, foreseeing what was about to happen, he did think it would be well if his right hon. Friend would state the principles of the course he intended to pursue. With reference to the particular question before the House, he thought it was only reasonable that the West Indians should have that amount of protection that would carry them through the experiment that was in progress, but he did not wish to continue an absolute prohibition upon foreign sugars; and he should wish to see the differential duty diminished, although not to the extent now proposed. He considered that, however, to be the question of degree proper to be discussed in the committee. He would again express his confidence in the soundness of the general principle of relaxing, as far as possible, all restriction on trade and commerce.

Mr. *Grote*: the hon. Member for Lincoln, Sir, appears to me to have justly appreciated the true subject and the real character of this debate, and to have judged perfectly right in giving to it a much wider range than that of the mere question of sugar duties. In particular, I rejoice that by doing this he has called forth the speech which we have just heard from the hon. Member for Wakefield; a speech which I listened to with the greatest satisfaction, as well for its excellent sense as for its frankness. The propositions laid before the House by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, as the hon. Member for Lincoln has truly stated, are comprehensive both in their present import and in their future promise; they open the prospect of a revision of our commercial tariff in all its chief defective points; and the number of separate protected interests which the hon. Member for Lincoln has enumerated, in his anxiety to find a ground of justification for protection to the landed interest, sufficiently demonstrate how great is the need for a searching legislative interference. I wish, Sir, in a few words to express my accordance with the general scheme proposed by her Majesty's Government for the raising of additional revenue during the present year by a revision of our tariff, and by the lightening of duties simply differential and protective. I think that the proposition which has been made to us for supplying the existing deficiency in the revenue by a new arrangement of our commercial system, instead of the imposition of additional taxes on the people, is a wise, an advisable, and a comprehensive proposition. Even if there were no pressing exigencies arising out of an ill-supplied Treasury—if we had at this moment a surplus instead of a deficiency—I should still hold that a reduction of those duties, which are simply protective and differential, and which enhance the cost of living in England without enriching the public purse, is a duty which we owe to the country. But when I find the same course of conduct recommended by considerations of immediate urgency—when I discover that the same amended tariff, which is calculated to enlarge our commerce, and to extend our means of giving employment to the people, may also be made to relieve them from the necessity of new positive payments over and above the heavy burthens which they now endure—I must

say that I entertain the fullest satisfaction and the most entire conviction in supporting the project which has been laid before us by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies. How much of the budget which has now been proposed for our notice may be destined to pass into a law, at present I know not. But entertaining, as I do, a sincere persuasion that our present Corn-laws are eminently injurious in many ways, and believing that a nearer approximation to the principles of free trade in other articles would be beneficial to the great mass of the public, rich as well as poor, agricultural as well as commercial—I cannot but feel rejoiced that the proposition of the Government has opened to us the prospect of such considerable improvement, even though the realization is destined to be deferred. The three subjects to which our attention is called in the budget, are corn, sugar, and timber—three main articles of consumption for every household, from the extreme of opulence to the humblest independent cottager. With respect to all these three articles, there are the same general modes of reasoning applicable; there are indeed, some peculiarities belonging to each, especially to the corn trade, which do not belong to the other two; but, in the main, the reasoning respecting all the three, comprises the same conditions, and tends towards the same objects. The purpose of all legislation, as I understand it, with respect to these three trades, ought to be, to place within the reach of the consumer the best, the cheapest, and the most constant supply of all these essential articles of consumption. If it be necessary for the supply of the Government expenditure that a certain additional expense should be incurred by consumers before they can procure for themselves these important comforts of life, it ought at least to be the object of the Legislature to reduce this charge to a minimum—to find out with how small an additional charge super-added to the inevitable cost of production, the public credit and the public defence can be sustained. This is the sense in which I, at least, construe my duties as a legislator, in regard to the relation between consumer and producer—to try by every means in my power to make the income of each individual householder among the public go as far as it can be made to go in the purchase of comforts

and necessities of life. I need not mention, what is but too notorious, that the enormous majority of these incomes are humble and moderate, very many of them scanty and insufficient—and that, therefore, any artificial addition made to the cost of procuring the necessary comforts of life, cannot but be deeply and painfully felt. Now, Sir, I well know that the project as now laid before us by the Government, neither accomplishes, nor professes to accomplish, anything like that which I conceive to be the proper end and object of commercial legislation. The project of the Government does by no means study the single object of rendering the essential comforts of life cheap and accessible to the great body of consumers. If it did, it would be more consonant to my opinions than it is now; but I know that it does no such thing. It still retains the principle of protection, or that which is erroneously so called, but which is, in regard to the consumer, the direct negation of protection. It still perpetuates the custom of taxing every consumer, not for public purposes and common utility, but for the benefit, sometimes real, sometimes imaginary, of a particular knot of producers. But though the Government project continues and maintains this principle of protection, it restricts the extent of its application, and it mitigates considerably the form and manner in which the principle has hitherto been brought to bear. Sir, I have said before, in discussing the subject of the corn-laws, and I say again now, that I think the trade in corn ought to be perfectly free, and that corn is not a proper subject of revenue, inasmuch as to impose a tax upon imported corn, which can never, under any system, form more than one-tenth of the whole consumption, has the effect of raising the price to an equal extent upon the whole nine-tenths grown at home, without any benefit to the revenue. The project of the Government, therefore, does not accomplish, and does not aim at accomplishing, all which I think ought to be done about the corn trade. But it does aim at procuring, and it does in reality procure, a most serious and important amelioration in the present condition of things. It converts the corn trade, which is now distinguished from all other trades by its extreme irregularity, and its enormous fluctuations, into a steady, regular, and calculable proceeding. I do

not think that the ordinary prices of corn will be lower in any sensible degree under a fixed duty of 8s. than they are now; but I entertain full confidence that the maximum of price in extraordinary times will be much less high; and that the trade altogether will lose that hazardous and feverish character which has been so fearfully manifested during the last few years. We shall no longer be exposed to those sudden and unforeseen demands for large importations of foreign grain which so fatally derange the ordinary habits of trade, and so greatly aggravate the dangers of our monetary system. I do believe that this will be hailed by the mercantile community generally as a great and essential improvement. I know that there are many of that community who are favourable to protection, of greater or less extent, to the landlords, but I am persuaded there is not one who does not regard the alternate hot and cold fits of the corn trade, as it now stands, to be a serious evil, and who will not accept, with comparative satisfaction and gratitude, a system which combines a fixed amount of protection with a regular and steady course of trade. The same principle of dealing which the Government project applies to the corn trade, it applies to the sugar trade also. It recognises and maintains the principle of protection to the colonial producer, but it limits the extent of protection granted; it reduces the extent of protection from its present exorbitant amount to a differential duty of 50 per cent. Now, to hear the manner in which this subject has been debated, one would suppose that a differential duty of 50 per cent. was tantamount to no protection at all. But let me entreat Gentlemen to reflect upon this amount of protective duty with reference to any independent foreign market for our exports. Let us suppose that the United States, or any other independent nation, chose to receive French goods at a duty of 50 per cent. less than English goods, would there not be the greatest and the most serious complaints amongst our exporting merchants, of the hindrance thereby placed upon their trade? I do submit to the House that, assuming the principle of protection to be a just one, a differential duty of 50 per cent. is as much as can reasonably be demanded at the expense of the general public on behalf of any special interest whatsoever. I presume it is hardly necessary to prove, that a low price

of an article like sugar, is an event highly desirable and beneficial to the community—felt most sensibly by every poor family in the country in its morning and evening meal. And so Gentlemen seem unanimously to regard it, when the question is about admitting East-India sugar into consumption on the same footing as West-India sugar. For what other purpose is it that this relaxation of our previous law has been recently carried into effect, except to render the supply of sugar cheaper and more abundant? But when the question is about the policy of admitting Cuba and Brazil sugar for consumption in England, it then seems as if the cheapness of sugar to the consumer here became a matter of indifference. Now, Sir, I must confess that I take a very different view of this matter. To me it seems a very great blessing that the poorer population of this country should have the command of sugar at the most moderate cost; and if there be countries so favoured by nature as to be able and willing to supply them with it, I, at least, will not concur in the imposition of insurmountable factitious barriers, for the purpose of preventing them from getting it. The hon. Member for Beverley told us on Friday, as matter of satisfaction and delight, that the supply of sugar from the East-Indies was greatly on the increase, and that he expected in the course of the next year, not less than 100,000 tons. Yet the same hon. Gentleman, in the same speech, went on to tell us, as a subject of dismay and uneasiness, that the lands of Cuba were so fertile and so productive, as to yield as much sugar from one acre as can be obtained from six acres of the best land in the East-Indies. If this be correct, why is the cheapness of sugar a misfortune when it comes from Cuba—a blessing when it comes from the East Indies? I observe, Sir, that those who concur in the views of the noble Lord opposite (the Member for Liverpool) adopt two lines of argument which seem to me inconsistent one with the other. First, they treat the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as one which threatens the colonies with ruin, by the extensive consumption which it will occasion of foreign slave-grown sugar. Next, they take the present price of colonial sugar, and of foreign sugar, at the proposed rates of duty, and they make out that the fall of price will be so insignificant as to yield no additional revenue

worth mentioning to the Exchequer. Either of these two arguments may stand singly, but they cannot both stand together. The inclination of my mind, and the information which I have received, leads me to believe that the extension in the consumption will not be so great as the Chancellor of the Exchequer calculates; but upon that point I reserve my opinion until I shall have heard the right hon. Gentleman explain the grounds upon which his calculation is founded. But the main stress seems to be laid upon the question of slavery, by Gentlemen who take an unfavourable view of this proposition. Emphatic and eloquent denunciations against the system of slavery in Brazil and Cuba are delivered, and such expressions of feelings both deserve and command the ready and the unanimous acquiescence of this House. But Sir, while we sympathise with the feelings in which these sentiments originate, it is necessary for us to ask ourselves to what conclusions Gentlemen intend to make it subservient? Are the conclusions such as reasonably follow from the premises, and such as are worthy of the premises? I must say that I think they are not. When in former years the mischiefs of slavery as it existed in our own islands were forcibly exposed, the conclusions deduced were natural and legitimate, and worthy of the premises laid for them. Parliament said, "Here is a great evil existing, let us interfere and put it down." The generous exertions of those who exposed the evil were rewarded with their proper result—a direct and effective intervention for the purpose of putting down the evil. But when gentlemen denounce the practice of slavery as it exists in Cuba, in Brazil, or in other foreign countries, what are the practical conclusions which they deduce from their doctrine? Do they propose that we should formally require the Governments of those countries to abrogate slavery, and that in the event of refusal, we should fit out armaments to enforce compliance? No person has ever started such a proposition. Do they propose to declare all the products of slave labour tainted, and to forbid them as abominations of which it is not permitted under any circumstances to partake, just as certain descriptions of food are peremptorily interdicted in many countries by religious precept? Sir, I do not find that any person proposes this; even my right hon. Friend, the Member

for the Tower Hamlets, disclaimed any such proposition on Friday evening last. But, Sir, unless Gentlemen are prepared to maintain this proposition, they abandon the moral ground of the question—they can no longer take their stand upon the dignity of a moral and conscientious scruple—they cannot be allowed to reason upon the moral view of the question up to a certain point, and then to turn their backs upon it when they find inconveniences thickening around them—they cannot be allowed to rate the stain arising from slave manipulation at some fixed sum, such as one penny or twopence per pound, and nothing more. So long as Gentlemen encourage the introduction of slave-grown sugar and slave-grown tobacco, I say that I am only following their example when I treat this question as one of prudence and public convenience, and not of any peremptory moral obligation. I enter fully into those generous sympathies on which the abhorrence of slavery rests: but I must confess that the expression of them loses much of its charm in my eyes, when I find that it ends in nothing else but the factitious recommendation of a rival species of sugar for consumption. We denounce the slave-holders in Brazil and Cuba: we exclude their produce from our markets: and upon whom is it that the effects of our indignation chiefly fall? Why, they fall principally on the British consumer of sugar—and most and worst upon the poorest of British consumers. I would entreat of Gentlemen who object to the proposed alteration of sugar duties, on the ground of their hatred of slavery, to consider what has been the consequence of the policy upon which we have acted up to the present moment. We have hitherto excluded, by means of our system of duties, all foreign sugars, and have we by means of this system brought about any diminution in the extent of slavery, either in Cuba or Brazil? Have we ever prevented the great enlargement of that system? Sir, the fact is, I believe, notorious, that slavery, and the products of slavery, have largely spread in these two countries. We have been successful in causing our own population to bear the serious inconvenience of an unnaturally high price of sugar; but we have not been successful in causing the decrease of slavery, or even in preventing the increase of slavery, in Brazil and Cuba. No doubt I shall be

told that the development of slavery would have been still greater had we admitted Brazil and Cuba sugars to our markets; and this, to a certain extent, is true. To a certain extent, our scale of duties has prevented the cultivation of sugars in those two countries from being pushed so far as it otherwise would have been. But how, and by what means, has our scale of duties had the effect of preventing this? Why, simply by means of a serious indirect tax and a heavy burden upon the British consumer of sugar. I do submit that the burden and inconvenience which our present system inflicts upon our own population is incomparably greater than the preventive effect which we produce, as regards sugar cultivation in the Brazils. By persevering in our present system of exclusion, I cannot perceive that we stand the least chance of extinguishing slavery in the countries now under discussion. By a judicious relaxation in that system, it is at least possible that something in that way may be done. We cannot act upon Brazil by force, and we must, therefore, have recourse to persuasion. It might be possible by a well-arranged commercial treaty with Brazil to obtain from that government more effective precautions against the importation of slaves from Africa than any which are now in force. But this will be thoroughly out of the question, so long as we deliberately and systematically exclude their products. And if such condition as this can be obtained by amicable negotiation, we shall have done more to lessen the evils of slavery than can be accomplished by persisting for a century in the system of exclusion. Sir, the resolution moved by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, dwells upon the hope that the example of what has been done by England, may lead other countries to follow in the same track of trying to extinguish slavery. I fervently hope that it may have such an effect; but I must say, that the line of argument which has been taken by the noble Lord, in support of his motion, tends to defeat rather than to accelerate the accomplishment of this object. For one of the main points upon which the noble Lord insists is, the enormous and incalculable advantage which the inhabitants of Brazil and Cuba enjoy by means of slave labour—an advantage such, that it can only be counterbalanced by the most exorbitant differential duties. If

there be any persons connected with these countries now present at our debate, I fear that they will retire disposed to exaggerate far more than the reality the benefits of slave-labour. Assuredly, neither the example of England, as expounded by the noble Lord, nor the commercial policy of England as he would recommend it, are calculated to induce the Brazilians to imitate this Government in putting an end to slavery. And after all, is it quite certain that there would be any greater readiness than there is now to admit Brazilian sugar, even if those countries were cultivated by free labour, and if the objection arising out of slavery did not exist? When I find the hon. Member for Beverley dwelling upon the fertility of Cuba as a subject of alarm and apprehension, I feel quite assured that anti-slavery motives are not the only grounds concerned in this refusal. The noble Lord, in his proposed resolution, has spoken of the example of England inducing other countries to adopt measures for mitigating or extinguishing slavery. In common with the noble Lord, I have a great opinion of the powerful influence of English example upon other nations, either for good or for evil. It is for that reason, amongst many others, that I desire to see our commercial tariff placed upon a more liberal footing with regard to the admissibility of foreign products, because I feel persuaded that such a change of conduct could not fail to provoke the like liberality from other nations, just as the exclusive spirit which now predominates in our tariff has contributed with but too much efficacy to foster a preference for restrictions on the part of other nations. Looking to the extent of our export trade, and to the large proportion of our population which depends upon it, I am sure that no country can have a stronger interest than ourselves in diffusing throughout the world a spirit of friendly reciprocity in regard to commercial interchange. I am sorry to say, that the spirit in which our legislation has been conducted has been hitherto, with few exceptions, such as to cause unfriendly dispositions in other powers, and to seal up their ports to our commerce. We have struggled to maintain the possibility of selling largely to other nations, without buying anything from them in return; and we seem to have thought that the admission of any foreign produce for sale in this country was a loss not to be submitted



to, except under the pressure of an overwhelming necessity. I hope that we may live to see the time when the example of England, to which the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, has invited foreign nations to attend in regard to the extinction of slavery, may be no longer cited by foreign nations in support of a restrictive system of commerce. The question now before us in regard to the sugar duties is, not whether the principle of protection to the colonial producer shall be abandoned, but whether that system of protection can, with any show of justice or respect to the great body of consumers, be carried beyond a differential duty of 50 per cent. Can you with any reason require the consumer to pay more than this difference, considering that he pays it, not for the benefit of the State, but for the benefit of certain other private interests—that is, for the benefit of certain other private individuals not at all better entitled to the protection and favour of the Legislature than he is himself? I do not wish, Sir, to draw pictures of distress, or to move the feelings of the House by describing the circumstances of those whose condition is the least comfortable amongst our population. I have never thought that a just or deliberate judgment upon any contravened question could be promoted by such a mode of treating it. It is enough for my argument to state the plain matter of fact, that there are millions of persons of both sexes in these realms to whom the difference in the price of sugar is most sensibly felt in their morning and evening meals. Is it fair or reasonable to draw from each of these persons a sum of money for the avowed purpose of protecting the private interest of individuals engaged in a particular trade greater than is represented by a differential duty of 50 per cent.? Would this be equitable or prudent dealing? Sir, this is a strong case, — but this is not all. Would it be fair or reasonable, in order that you may retain a differential duty of more than 100 per cent. upon sugar, to proceed to impose fresh additional burdens upon these purchasers in other ways, over and above the factitious price which they are forced to pay for their sugar? In the present state of the revenue new funds must be provided by some means or other, and the question is, are you to resort to new taxes and new burdens for the purpose of upholding

a differential duty of more than 100 per cent. in favour of colonial sugar? This is the real question, and if the people of England, under these circumstances, remonstrate against new duties, I think it will be very difficult to furnish them with a satisfactory answer. We are told, Sir, that the high price of sugar last year was a temporary accident; that large supplies are coming forward, and that the price, even now greatly fallen, will soon range at a height no greater than it has maintained during the last. I hope the case may prove as they state, but I must contend that this amounts to no vindication of the existing rate of differential duty. The question still remains, can the East Indies and the West Indies supply the consumption of sugar to this country, being favoured in the rate of duty, as compared with all other sugars, in the proportion of 24s. to 36s. per cwt.? If they can, they will still maintain the exclusive supply. If they cannot, can they with any colour of reason, talk of being able to supply sugar at a low price, when the price of foreign sugar is, by their own admission, so very much lower? And can they reasonably claim to be allowed to impose upon the consumer, for their own benefit, a charge so exorbitant and so overwhelming? I do, indeed, admit that the cost at which colonial sugar can be supplied, whether as cheaply as foreign sugar or not, is a matter of importance to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in calculating his revenue; but the fact, that colonial sugar can be supplied so cheaply, is a reason not in favour of an exorbitant differential duty, but against it. I trust that Gentlemen opposite, who take so eager and vehement a part against the proposed alteration of the sugar duties, will, at least, compute the magnitude of the tax which they are imposing upon the consumers of sugar for the protection of private interests. The aggregate consumption of sugar last year was something rather above 180,000 tons, equal to near 400,000,000lbs. weight. One penny per pound upon 400,000,000lbs. is equal to 1,600,000*l.* sterling. All this is a tax paid by the country in addition to the large sum which finds its way to the coffers of the State, for the simple purpose of protection, and the artificial enhancement of price, arising entirely out of the duties, is certainly far more than one penny per pound. I do submit that the mere state-

ment of these enormous figures ought to make Gentlemen pause before they insist upon maintaining a protective duty of more than fifty per cent. It was only a few days since, Sir, that I presented a petition in favour of a revision of our commercial tariff, signed by a large number of capital, extensive, and intelligent merchants of London. I am happy to think, that in supporting the present propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am contributing something to carry into effect the general prayer of that petition, and to forward the large commercial interests of that constituency whom I have the honour to represent. Believing, as I do most sincerely, that their interests coincide on this occasion with those of the great body of the people, as well in enlarging our foreign commerce, as in lowering the price of the main articles of domestic consumption, and avoiding the necessity for raising new public burdens—I lend a cheerful and hearty support to the proposition laid before us by the Government.

Mr. Colquhoun said, there had been a great inclination on the other side of the House to widen the field of debate, and introduce the general question of free trade; but he would recall the attention of hon. Members to the fact, that the real question before the House was the amount at which the sugar duties should be fixed. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had skilfully diverted the attention of the House from the real question, in his speech of the other evening. A speech characterised by greater ability—a speech more delightful to listen to, as an exercise of genius, he had never heard. He said that, not only because it was a speech of the most ample argument—of the greatest possible eloquence—of the most powerful appeals, but because he felt how untenable and baseless a case, resting on no foundation of argument or policy, the noble Lord had to deal with. The noble Lord had endeavoured to mystify his hearers, by setting before them all the marvels which free trade was to work, whereas, the real point for the House to determine was the duty on sugar. The hon. Member for Wigan had told the House, that last year, when the reduction of the sugar duties was discussed, the President of the Board of Trade asked but for one year more to secure the safety of the great experiment of emancipation, and said, that if it failed,

he would be quite prepared to agree to the proposal for reduction. He found that the right hon. Gentleman was represented in the pages of *Hansard* to have said, that he believed the people of this country required that the experiment of emancipation should be fairly carried out, and that they would think it was not fairly carried out if at this moment, when the colonists were struggling with the difficulties of their situation, the flood-gates of foreign supply should be thrown open. Were these circumstances altered? He did not think the people of England would accept the championship of the noble Lord. They had declared in former years, when labouring under great financial difficulties, that they would not allow the existence of slavery in the British dominions, nor permit the slave trade to be carried on in the world, and they would not now retrace their steps, and upset all they had done to forward that cause. Because the present Government had involved the finances of the country in inextricable confusion, and in five years had added 7,000,000*l.* to the debt, was the House to be called on to find a remedy for the difficulties, and such a remedy as would utterly blast and destroy the great measure on which the people of England had set their hearts? There was one remedy which he ventured to suggest, and that was, that they should take the finances of the country out of the hands of those who had brought them into disorder, and that they should find out other persons who would manage them in a different way. He was sure the noble Lord and his colleagues were quite ready for that dignified retirement to which the country invited them; he was sure there was a party in the country which was anxious that a change in the public councils should take place, and that party he conceived was the people of England. If the noble Lord had the slightest doubt on this subject, he had only to consult the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Control, and Member for Nottingham, who could inform him, that if there was one topic at Nottingham more unpopular than another, more unpopular even than the new Poor-law, though that was most unpopular, it was the composition of the Ministry who passed it. So much was that the case, that his esteemed and excellent friend Mr. Larpent, found it the best policy to get rid of it as soon as he could, by saying, "I do not come here as a friend of the Government; I have nothing to do with them;

if I go into the House of Commons, I go as an independent member." Such, he could assure the noble Lord, was equally the feeling of the inhabitants of Leeds and Sheffield. The noble Lord claimed for the Government the credit of having abolished slavery. Had the noble Lord forgotten who was Colonial Minister when the Emancipation Act passed? Had he forgotten that to the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire was committed the difficult task of conciliating hostile interests, and that to his unrivalled talents for debate was allotted the duty of defending it against two classes of opponents—those who thought that no such measure should be passed, and those who thought the measure of Government did not go far enough? The noble Lord opposite had no right to continue to claim for his party the name of Whigs after they had been deserted by all that was respectable among their former adherents, and thrown away, like a cast-off garment, the principles which distinguished the Whigs of former days. With respect to the argument of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the supply of sugar was deficient, it would be remembered, that during the discussions on the East India Rum Bill, the right hon. Gentleman assured the House, that India was capable of producing an unlimited quantity of that commodity. The hon. Member for London had expressed a doubt whether slave-labour sugar were less expensive than free-labour sugar. Now, what said the witness whose evidence he had already quoted upon that very point?—

"Slave labour is cheaper when the system is worked with a frightful recklessness of human suffering, which appears to obtain in Cuba, where males alone are imported, with the deliberate purpose of getting the quickest and largest returns from their thews and sinews, and of killing them off by unmitigated labour."

Placing the question upon this footing, the House had to choose between cheap sugar and dear; and how cheapened? By grinding down the African race, not, indeed, in our own colonies, but in Cuba and the Brazils, where the curse of slavery still existed in all its horrors. Yes, in those countries, if it were cheapened, it was cheapened at the price of blood, and by the sacrifice of human life. After the Act of Emancipation passed, in 1833, it was a monstrous thing that the British Government should dare to offer such a proposal to the British House of Commons;

and they had reason to thank God that there was no doubt how such a proposition would be disposed of. He likewise found by referring to the same volume—he meant the blue book containing the evidence taken before the committee on the import duties, that the three great authorities on political economy, Mr. Porter, Mr. M'Gregor, and Mr. Deacon Hume, all united in stating, that to reduce the duty on sugar, not only so long as the experiment of emancipation continued, but likewise so long as you imposed duties on our colonies for the benefit of our manufacturers at home, was monstrous, as being contrary to every principle of political economy. He would not trouble the House with reading the evidence of Mr. Porter and Mr. M'Gregor, but would confine himself to reading the evidence of Mr. Deacon Hume. That gentleman said,

"I am strongly of opinion that all our colonies would be able to compete with the world, and to become exceedingly prosperous, if they themselves had free trade offered to them; and, having granted that boon to them, I think it would be wholly unnecessary to support them by any protection in their commodities in this country. At the same time I must be understood, that they must be colonies that are placed in all respects upon an equal footing with those countries which produce similar commodities. I cannot conceive, having thirty years ago abolished the slave trade, and now abolished slavery itself, that any question of free trade can arise between Jamaica and Cuba—Cuba with abundance of rich and fresh soil, not only having the advantage of employing slaves, whatever that may be, but notoriously importing the enormous amount of 40,000 or 50,000 slaves every year; they have, in fact, the slave trade and slavery; and, as the laws of this country have deprived the planter in Jamaica of that means of raising his produce, I conceive that that is a question, like several others, that is taken entirely out of the category of free trade."

And yet, with this evidence staring him in the face, the first attempt of the noble Lord opposite in his project of establishing free trade, is to do that very thing which Mr. Deacon Hume denounced as absurd, preposterous, and absolutely inconceivable. He repudiated with indignation the idea of foisting a measure like this upon the country under the notion of its being a measure of free trade. "But," said hon. Members on the other side of the House, "oh, but this is all for the interests of our manufacturers." He would state frankly, that he did not go along with the hon. Member for

Wigan in the views which he had that night stated respecting free trade. On the contrary, he would take any manufacturer whom the hon. Member for Wigan might select, and would ask him this question, "Whether the most important point with him as a practical man was not this, to keep those good markets which he had already for his own produce?" He was quite certain, that there was not a single manufacturer who would answer it in the negative. What, then, were the most important markets for our manufactures? The right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on a former evening had said, that the Brazils took annually 5,000,000*l.* of our manufactures. Now, on that occasion the Chancellor of the Exchequer took the evidence of the witnesses examined before the committee on the import duties, and not his own official figures, and his own official figures proved, that it was not more than 2,600,000*l.* If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would exaggerate the Brazilian produce sent here to nearly twofold its amount, it became the manufacturers of this country to consider what their other markets were against which this conjoint blow was dealt by the same right hon. Gentleman. They were the markets of our East Indian possessions, which took from us 5,000,000*l.* of our goods; they were the markets of our West Indian possessions, which took from us 4,000,000*l.*—they were the markets of our North American colonies, which took from us 3,000,000*l.* of our goods. Yes, incredible as it appeared on the first blush, Her Majesty's Government now proposed to strike a blow against our three greatest markets—markets which were under our own command, which nothing could take from us but the infatuation of a measure like the present, and for which nothing was offered in compensation except the market of the Brazils. Besides, it ought not to be forgotten, that the Brazilian agriculturist had other produce besides his sugar to offer in exchange for our manufactures. Why did he take those manufactures? Because they were the best and the cheapest that he could procure, and he would therefore take them, whether the House passed this measure or not. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had told them, the other night, that this was a great commercial crisis; but he trusted, that the House would permit him to contrast with this declaration of the noble Lord a declaration made by one of his noble Colleagues last year, when defending him-

self against a charge brought against him by an hon. Friend of his for not having exercised his influence sufficiently on the behalf of the interests of British commerce. The noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in reply to his hon. Friend, said—

"You are mistaken. I will show you, that under my Administration the commerce and manufactures of the country have flourished in an unprecedented manner. In the ten years (added his Lordship) between 1830 and 1840, the exports increased from 38,000,000*l.* declared value, to 53,000,000*l.* that is, thirty-nine per cent."

They had so increased—and where principally? In the foreign or colonial markets? During those ten years our exports to the Brazils had increased eight per cent.; to the British West Indies, which Government was now prepared to abandon forty per cent.; to the East Indies forty-four per cent.; and to the British North American colonies sixty-four per cent. In a word, the increase of our exports to all foreign countries was thirty-five per cent., whilst to our colonial possessions generally, it was sixty-one per cent. Therefore, when the question was put to the House, what were the markets which it ought most to favour? his advice would be that it should answer, "We will not neglect the foreign markets; they are of the highest importance to us; but above all we will not neglect our colonial markets." Moreover, when the Government was aiming a blow at our markets in the East Indies, in the West Indies, and in the North American colonies, to offer this measure as an advantage to the manufacturing interests was an insult to their understandings which they could not but see through, and which he trusted they would not fail to resent. But the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies had said, that we were now to have a new basis for our commercial policy with the colonies. Indeed! Why he had supposed from a former speech of the noble Lord, that he had intended to base his commercial policy with the colonies on the system of Mr. Pitt. But no—we were not to stand on that basis—we were not to remove restrictions cautiously and gradually—above all, we were not to discuss the propriety of them without exciting the animosities and the prejudices of party. Instead of pursuing that course, the noble Lord was pursuing a course the very reverse of it. He was making this question of commercial policy a mere party question. It was the first time

in our history that commercial questions and manufacturing interests had been used as instruments of party. He repeated that such was the fact. In all former questions of commercial policy, whether they affected the Corn-laws, or our regulations respecting the East or the West Indies, there had been a complete fusion of parties. Whigs, Tories, and Jacobins, Conservatives, Liberals, and Radicals, had all amalgamated together; there had been no display of party tactics, but each individual Member had acted upon his own view of the question before the House. But now an attempt was made to turn a mere question of commerce into a question of party. [*Cheers.*] Those cheers so given and so reiterated, reminded him of an expression which had fallen from the lips of the noble Secretary for the Colonies on a former night, who had stated that hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House were animated by the spirit of faction, because they would not consent to his new-fangled scale of sugar duties—that very scale against which he had protested only last Session with all his energies, and which he had announced as most destructive to all our public and private interests. Now, because his noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool, acting as the guardian of a large commercial community, and instigated by the purest feelings of humanity, felt it to be his duty to protest against this very scale, the noble Lord asserted, not that it was the whisper of a faction, but that it was faction itself. He would tell the hon. Gentleman opposite what was party and what was faction. It was party, and it was faction, when a Government having been in office for ten years, and never having made a single attempt to promote the principles of free trade, threw some measure to that effect before the public which they knew they could not carry. [*Cheers.*] If hon. Gentlemen opposite meant to tell him by those cheers that they had been introducing measures of free trade like those of Mr. Huskisson, cautiously and gradually, he would tell them that they were mistaken, and that what had been carried in the ten years before their administration far exceeded all that they had carried during the ten years that their administration had lasted. But if at a time when as a Ministry they were completely paralyzed—when they could not carry a single measure which they proposed—when the mere proposal of a measure by them damaged it irretrievably with the country

—if at that moment they resolved to take up a measure, which they had resisted to the uttermost when it was agitated last year by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, and which the head of the Government had then denounced as impossible to be granted without the commission of an act of lunacy—if at that moment they determined to throw up their caps for free trade, and to tell the House that they were enamoured of the beauties of that system, he would take the liberty of telling them that that was a mode of dealing with the important question of free trade which the manufacturers of this country would neither like nor approve of, for it had already enlisted three great interests against the doctrines of free trade—doctrines which it was better to deal with at once than to leave them unsettled and liable to all the infusion of party malice and of party venom. It was upon these grounds that he should give his decided opposition to the proposal of her Majesty's Government.

Mr. Greg: Sir, the personal attack upon the Government which you have just heard from the hon. Member for Kilmarnock, I shall leave some member of that Government to reply to, but I can say for myself and my constituents that we heard with the greatest pleasure the announcement of her Majesty's Ministers, comprising as it does a series of measures, fraught with benefit to the whole community, but more particularly to the manufacturing interests, which have long been labouring under a distress unprecedented alike for length and severity, and which are now reduced to a state of despair, from which they can be relieved only by some such measures as those brought forward by her Majesty's Ministers. I had hoped that the very comprehensiveness of the measures would have secured their general reception. That the avoiding the imposition of new taxes whilst the revenue was failing, would be considered as one great recommendation, and that the securing to the people an increased supply of the comforts and necessities of life, would have still farther conciliated public favour. I had flattered myself that they would have been accepted even by the monopolists themselves, as a compromise at least, however they might disregard the wants, the feelings, and the necessities of the great body of the people. That the East and West India interests, for instance, would have said, "Although we may be in some degree injured in our individual capacities, yet, if we are to be saved from

additional taxation, and the power of the community to consume our productions is to be increased by a general stimulus to trade, and particularly by supplying at a cheaper rate the necessaries of life, we may perhaps gain in one way as much as we may lose in the other." And that the landed interest on the other hand would have said, "Although, whilst our monopoly alone was attacked, and attacked without measure and reserve, we could not, and would not yield; yet if the manufacturers are prepared, as they say they are (and I can assure the hon. Member for Lincolnshire that they are prepared, with the single exception of the silk) to renounce all protection for themselves, if other monopolies are to be reduced, if we are to have cheaper sugar and coffee for ourselves and our dependents, and better timber for our houses and for our buildings; if, besides these advantages, we are to be saved from a property tax, and are to be left with a protection on our produce, amounting in duty and expense of importation to 50 per cent., why then, considering all these things, we shall best consult our own interest by adopting the plan, and assisting the Chancellor of the Exchequer in carrying his budget. I think, Sir, the monopolists might have said this with justice, with credit to themselves, and without ultimate injury to their prospects as a party. But it seems that I have been mistaken—that class interests are doomed to prevail for a time over those of the people at large, the interests of the few over that of the many. Yet, Sir, when I recall to mind how long the noble Lord below me gallantly contended for the privilege of returning Members to this House on the part of Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds, and long contended in vain, but that when he brought forward an extensive plan, "a sweeping measure of reform," as it was called, which gave Members to a hundred inferior places, this plan bore down all opposition, and became the law of the land, I am encouraged to hope, that when the entire plan of Ministers is before us in all its extent and in all its bearings, it will be found to be so wise, so ample, so beneficial, both in its immediate and prospective consequences, that it will secure an enthusiastic reception from the country, and that the same people who hailed the announcement of the Reform Bill, and by their exertions passed it into a law, but who have since complained that it has not borne all the good fruits which they had anticipated, will now, see-

ing these fruits presented to their acceptance, readily stretch forth their hands to seize them. With respect to the question more immediately before us, the sugar duties, I observe from the returns which have been laid before the House, that the average price of Brazil sugar for ten years, from 1825 to 1835, was 23*s.* 11*d.* per cwt., which, with the proposed duty of 36*s.*, would have given an average of 59*s.* 11*d.* to the consumer. During the same ten years, the price of British plantation averaged 29*s.* 6*d.* per cwt., which, with the duty of 24*s.*, gave a cost to the consumer of 53*s.* 6*d.* During this whole period, then, the price of Brazil sugar, being 6*s.* 5*d.* per cwt. higher than British plantation sugar, none would have come into consumption. In the five years from 1835 to 1840, the price of Brazil sugar, with 36*s.* duty would have given an average of 58*s.* 10*d.*, whilst British plantation sugar, during the same period, gave an average of 63*s.* 5*d.*, or a difference in favour of Brazil sugar of 4*s.* 7*d.* per cwt. Now, I am not aware that any Gentleman on the other side of the House, not even the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, pretends to assert that, should British plantation sugar continue as high for the future, as it has been for the last five years, that foreign sugar ought not to be admitted. By no means, they only say that plenty is coming from the East and West Indies. If they said otherwise, indeed, the sugar lords would be worse than the landlords, for these last do admit foreign corn when an absolute scarcity prevails. If the quantity should come, which is said to be coming from the East and West Indies, not one pound of Brazil sugar will come into consumption. How, then, say our opponents, will the Chancellor of the Exchequer obtain the additional revenue upon which he counts? Why, Sir, if the quantity comes forward of British plantation sugar which is foretold, prices will be low, and the increased consumption of it will give the required sum, at a duty of 24*s.*; and if the price of British plantation sugar be high, owing to another drought, or indisposition of the negro to work, then Brazil sugar will come into consumption, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer will get his expected revenue from the 36*s.* duty. So be the price high or low, the State will secure its revenue, and the poor people not be wholly deprived of one of the necessaries of life. It is very easy for right hon. Gentlemen who dine every day

upon a "stalled ox," and have as much sugar and coffee for themselves and servants, every morning and evening, as they want, whatever be the price, to talk of the labouring population of this kingdom preferring a "dinner of herbs;" but let me ask, is it a slight hardship, or small evil, that the aged parent, the sick wife, the delicate child, of all the labouring people of this country should be deprived of such necessary comforts, and deprived of them too, that the negro when he pleases to work as he should work, may earn a dollar a day, and revel in luxuries? Sir, I see no difference between passing a direct law, prohibiting nine-tenths of the people of England from tasting sugar and coffee, and passing a law which arbitrarily and artificially, so raises the price of those luxuries, as in point of fact, effectually to prevent the purchase of them. I shall say no more on this part of the subject, nor shall I enter at length upon that of the Corn-laws; but I shall say a few words upon the connexion between the two, that is between sugar and corn, which have been most properly connected by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his scheme of revenue, and which ought not to be separated in our discussion. Sir, the ability of the people to consume luxuries depends less upon the price of those luxuries, than upon their ability to procure the necessities of life; and I must express my strong and growing conviction, that nothing can be done permanently, or materially to improve the condition of the labouring classes, or to secure the enormous revenue, which must be raised, except by securing to the people an ample supply of food; and that all the measures which have not this for their object, or, at all events, which do not include this within their compass, must end in failure and disappointment. Sir, it must be remembered, that the labouring classes consume but a very trifling quantity of foreign luxuries, such as tea, sugar, coffee, and tobacco. It is only the surplus of their income which can be so expended, and in ordinary cases, this does not amount to more than one-tenth of the whole. Two-thirds of their expenditure is in food. Now, as to this prime article of their consumption, how can they be benefitted by any measures of relief which do not increase the actual quantity? If the quantity be not increased, how can they have more of it? and if they cannot procure more, I do not see how their condition can be ameliorated, or how that surplus fund is to be increased, out of which

alone they can purchase luxuries, and out of which alone the Chancellor of the Exchequer must look for increased revenue. We are in ordinary times, limited to the quantity of food produced in this country. The rich, and their dependents, and the middle classes generally, help themselves to the same quantity, whatever may be the price, and the balance remains for the labouring classes, being sometimes larger, sometimes smaller, according to the season. Now, suppose by some change of fiscal laws, or by other means, the demand for labour be doubled; and suppose, by way of illustration, that this increased demand for labour, doubled the rate of wages, what will the labourers do with these double wages? They must take them into the food market, and being insufficiently supplied with this necessary of life, every man tries to obtain a larger portion, and offers such portion of his wages as may procure it. But the number of quartern loaves, and bushels of potatoes are a fixed quantity and remain the same in amount whatever the demand. It is clear, therefore, that any additional wages they may earn, will be spent upon the purchase of food, or rather in the vain attempt to purchase more food; and as this quantity of food is a fixed quantity, the only effect will be to increase the price of food, and not to give to any one a larger share; consequently his condition would not be improved by such increase of his wages, nor his surplus income become greater, out of which surplus alone the revenue can be improved. All the additional earnings would go to swell the treasury of the landlord, and nothing would go to the Treasury of the State. If this view of the case be correct, and if not, I shall be happy to hear a refutation of it; it follows, that no efforts of enlightened legislation, no revision of import duties, no extension of Christian charity, can benefit the condition of the people, or add to the revenue, which is not accompanied by a security for an ample and regular supply of food, and this security can only be obtained by extending the surface of land upon which food is grown, and extending the range of climate, under which it is produced, that is, in other words, by an admission of foreign corn. Sir, it must not be forgotten that we export 50,000,000*l.* of manufactures and produce, and we are exposed to a competition in foreign markets, becoming every day more general and more severe. We cannot maintain ourselves in this struggle, unless we are upon something like equal

terms with our competitors. We cannot possibly pay fifty millions to the State, and another fifty millions to monopoly, and continue to maintain successfully the growing competition we have to encounter. It is true, taxation is heavy upon all, but heaviest upon those classes, who are exposed in their productions to foreign competition. We shall not improve our circumstances by one interest plundering another, still less by all interests uniting in plundering the public, but by following the system laid down by the noble Lord (Lord Russell) of extending the basis of national prosperity, and thus rendering in time, the burthens of the nation tolerable, which are now inconsistent with its comforts, and with its health, and which will in time, if not relieved, compromise its security.

Mr. *Walter* said, that in giving the vote which he should do upon this important question, he thought it his duty, as he stood upon somewhat peculiar grounds, to assign his reasons. He had voted against that most extravagant grant of 20,000,000*l.* to the West-India planters as well upon other grounds as because he deemed it made without sufficient enquiry. The sum of 20,000,000*l.*, considering the degree to which the sugar-market had been since affected, was very far from being the whole of the sum which had been taken out of the pockets of the British people. Between 15,000,000*l.* and 20,000,000*l.* were also stated to have been expended in attempts to put down the slave traffic, now more cruelly flourishing than ever. It had been calculated, also, that the total sum drawn from the country, since the abolition, by the increased price of West-India produce and other causes, was little less than 5,000,000*l.* annually more. Now, after such sacrifices, made for the benefit of our fellow-creatures of a darker complexion, who, it was asserted, had been raised to a state of comfort and happiness in our colonial possessions, he would just ask what had been the result with respect to our own labouring population, manufacturing as well as agricultural? Had they been rendered happier or more comfortable? Had they not, on the contrary, been rendered less capable of obtaining this necessary of sugar, as well as the other necessities of life? He might at least hope that a little of the feeling which was so redundant in favour of negro labourers might overflow in behalf of our white brethren at home. Now, the

Government appeared by this new scheme with respect to the sugar duties, to have united the ideas of both lowering prices and increasing the revenue. He doubted the possibility of such an issue, which he should otherwise think most desirable, and should be glad to concur in. But, in conversing with several intelligent merchants, who were themselves as anxious as the Government professed to be to relieve trade from its shackles, he found that there did not exist the slightest confidence in the financial measures proposed for this year, and more especially in this scheme, which contemplated the admission of foreign sugars. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to lay no heavier duty on foreign sugar than 12*s.* beyond that upon English. Now that, he apprehended, would be no protection at all for the produce of British possessions—for it appeared that the quantity of saccharine matter obtained from foreign sugar, particularly from Cuba, was so much greater than that obtained from sugar of British growth, that such duty would not do more than equalize them. India, also, was the best customer for our manufactures. Now, this step of admitting foreign sugars must immediately operate as a check on the cultivation of the sugar-cane in that country; so that the right hon. Gentleman would give up a certain interchange with India for a very uncertain one with other nations. He objected, also, to the scheme on other grounds. He thought that, if the finances of the country had been properly managed, there ought to have been no deficit to make up; and, for his own part, he was thoroughly satisfied of the incapacity of those who had occasioned the mischief to remedy it. Indeed, who ever expected to be cured of any complaint or malady—a consumption for example—by taking the nostrums of those whose quackery had produced the disorder? He should, therefore, vote for the proposition of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, although he thought it would have been judicious had he introduced into it some expressions declaratory of his desire to afford relief to the industrious classes of the community. With respect to the proposition of a change in the Corn-laws, he confessed he was friendly to such change, but the amount of the duty for which he would feel disposed to vote would depend very much upon what he saw done with the



Poor Bill. A noble Lord, the Member for Shropshire (Lord Darlington), had been kind enough the other night to speak in terms of high approbation of the result of a contest in which he had been personally concerned, and had expressed his opinion that it had greatly influenced the course pursued by her Majesty's Ministers. Whether that were the fact or not it belonged not to him to say, but of this he was very certain—that the issue of that contest, and a consideration of the principles on which he had succeeded, ought equally to influence the Members on both sides of the House, and he earnestly hoped it would be found that such would be the case.

Lord F. Egerton said, he had listened to the able speech of the noble Lord and to that of the right hon. Gentleman on a former occasion, and it appeared to him that the subjects they had stated to the House had been classified by them under three heads—namely, that a deficiency existing in the finances of the country, they proposed to fill up the gap by affording relief to the consumer in this country, by lowering the prices of commodities, by affording relief to our commerce, and by the extension of foreign trade. With regard to the first item, he confessed that matters of finance were foreign to his inclination to enter upon, and the present state of the finances of this country, he thought, would puzzle more able financiers than he was. But he alluded to the subject, in order to relieve himself from a responsibility which he thought the noble Lord, in his opening speech, had endeavoured to throw upon that (the Conservative) side of the House. "It is true," said the noble Lord, "that we are labouring under a deficiency; but this has arisen from causes over which we have no control, and in which you participate, as you voted for all the large expenses we incurred. We had Canada to support." It was true that they had not thought it a proper opportunity (and perhaps they might be blamed) when difficulties had arisen, to occupy themselves in picking holes in the Administration, under whose guidance these difficulties had risen. But he protested for himself, and those about him, against the share of responsibility which the noble Lord had cast upon them. "Canada," said the noble Lord, "was a subject of disturbance and of difficulty five years ago." He did not altogether

admit this; he thought that some of the causes of disturbance and difficulty arose from the conduct of the noble Lord, or of those about him. With regard to China, that question was perfectly open, as far as regarded any censure of her Majesty's Government. The next head related to the relief to be afforded to the commerce of the country, and he confessed that it was a subject of higher interest than any other the noble Lord had discussed—of higher interest than the interest of West Indians, or East Indians, speaking of them as separate interests. And when the noble Lord brought the subject before the House, he worked that part with the ability which he directed to all other topics. The noble Lord had drawn with the hand of a master and he would not say without truth, for he feared it was too true a picture of the condition of the Bolton operatives, turning away with despair, at the price of the commodity under consideration. It was not any part of the noble Lord's business—that was to be done by others, though it might be considered the natural course of proceeding—to call attention to the great experiment that had been made in the West Indies. But it was the noble Lord's business, and he was bound to show some means of affording sufficient and effectual relief; and he doubted not the noble Lord would have done so, if he could. He was far from undervaluing the smallest relief afforded to the poor consumer, and, accustomed as the operative was to deal with the smallest denomination of the coin of the realm, he would ask what was the amount of relief the noble Lord proposed. According to the calculation of the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, the reduction of the price of sugar consequent upon the carrying out of his propositions would be 1s. 6d. in the hundred weight. Now, according to this calculation, there was no denomination of coin sufficiently small to measure the advantage to be obtained by the poor customer of the grocer in the purchase of a pound of sugar. It appeared on calculation that the utmost extent of benefit would be six-tenths or sixty-two hundredths of a farthing in the pound. According to the calculation made by Dr. Bowring, the average consumption of sugar in this country was 17lb. per head per annum, and this therefore would, even to the average consumer, yield a benefit only amounting to 2½d. per annum. Small, however, as this benefit was, he

(Lord F. Egerton) would not undervalue it, nor would he oppose any measure adopted with the view of carrying it into effect, if such measure were not otherwise liable to grave objections. There was no part of the speech of the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies managed with more skill, and put forth with more effect, than that in which he endeavoured to deprive all those on the Opposition side of the House—all except his noble Friend, the Member for North Lancashire—of the advantage to be derived, not from advocating in flourishes of declamatory rhetoric, as seemed to be insinuated, the rights and liberties of the negro population of the West Indies, but of expressing the deep interest which they felt in the great experiment which was now in the course of trial in those colonies, and for the success of which all parties in the country expressed so much anxiety. He had not, like the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, grown gray in the cause of negro emancipation, but looking back into Parliamentary history, he could not see why the observations of the noble Lord should prevent his referring to this point, or having recourse to Mr. Gurney's book. It appeared to him perfectly demonstrable, as far as probabilities could be demonstrated, that the course proposed to be pursued by the noble Secretary for the Colonies would not only have the effect of giving a stimulus to slave labour, but that it would even do worse than this—it would also stimulate the traffic in slaves. It would hold out no bonus to those places where the slaves were treated with humanity, as far as slavery was consistent with humanity, but it offered the advantage to Cuba, that plague-spot amongst slave-holding communities, where all that was vicious in civilization was resorted to for the purpose of conducting with profit the worst and most profligate trade which mankind ever engaged in. Those were considerations which it would be impossible, for which it would be indefensible in any Parliament, to overlook. There seemed to exist a great difference of opinion in the House as to the manner in which the question before it ought to be treated. That difference was apparent when the course adopted by the hon. Member for Wigan was contrasted with that pursued by the hon. Member for London. The hon. Member for London treated it with

the seriousness which in his opinion the subject deserved, and, expressing an opinion, framed on philosophical deductions of his, ultimately arrived at conclusions favourable to the plan proposed by the noble Secretary for the Colonies. Notwithstanding the ability and temper with which the subject had been treated by the hon. Member for London, he could not arrive at his deductions nor assent to his propositions. On a former occasion, the subject had been treated by the hon. Member for Lambeth with a degree of levity which to him appeared wholly unsuitable. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had not long since treated the House to a dissertation respecting the metropolitan boroughs, and on that occasion expressed a strong opinion relative to that part of the Reform Bill which invested them with representative power. It was not for him to criticise the noble Lord's dissertation, but the results of which the noble Lord complained were strange and anomalous. The hon. Member for Lambeth said,

"That his right hon. and learned Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, might perhaps maintain, that slavery was in itself sinful."

Surely that would be no very unreasonable proposition, nor one which it would be very difficult to maintain. The hon. Gentleman further added,

"That was a principle which every bigot might appeal to in support of the grossest act of intolerance. They might as well pass an act of uniformity to settle a matter of faith or ceremonial as enforce their own opinion on such a subject by Act of Parliament."

The hon. Gentleman seemed further to intimate that the right hon. and learned Member was more fit for the judicial functions of the Consistorial Court, than to pronounce upon questions of international law. It was unnecessary for him to enter into a defence of the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, but he would ask was it a false, a factitious, or a spurious humanity which would hesitate at so critical a moment and shrink from any dangerous interference with the state of the West Indies when the results of a great experiment which was made at a vast expense were about to be ascertained—when the colony was, as it were, labouring with the throes and pangs of parturition, and about to "thank the Gods for all her travail past?" The noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was so

doubt actively employed (and if not, he was unmindful of his duty) endeavouring, as far as his resources and diplomatic relations enabled him, to check and diminish the traffic in slaves throughout all other quarters of the world. He was no doubt engaged in negotiations for this purpose with the Sultan, and with that good-humoured old gentleman who ruled over Egypt. The object of the noble Lord was, of course, to effect the present diminution and ultimate extinction of a traffic equal in atrocity to that which existed between the coast of Africa and America. He had heard the other day of a conversation said to have taken place between the Pasha, and a celebrated naval commander. The Pasha, it was stated, said, that he hated the slave-trade, but that England took her own time to effect her measures. "Give me time also," said the Pasha, "I cannot do these things in a hurry." In any further negotiation on this subject the instance of England would no doubt be again quoted, but would not the cunning and clever old man be able to retort, both with truth and severity, that though England had emancipated her slaves at great expense, and that professions which had for a long time been made had ultimately been acted upon, yet still when a financial pressure came, and with the ostensible view of affording to the consumer of sugar in this country the benefit of the six-tenths of a farthing reduction in the pound, the great Leader of the House of Commons came forward with a measure calculated to subvert all the good which had previously been effected? By adopting the proposition now made, the country would lose the position—the great and elevated position—which she had attained at so much cost. The arguments adduced by the hon. Member would lead to conclusions far different from those which the hon. Gentleman deduced from them. They would lead to the conclusion that it would be more humane to refit our slave-ships, to re-open the traffic in slaves under restrictions more stringent than those which formerly existed, and once again, under the supervision of active inspectors, to legalize the traffic. Might not the West Indies say, in answer to the proposition, "If there is to be a system of non-restriction, let the system be general. Do not restrict us from the employment of slave-labour, which is permitted to others. We

will compete with countries, the soil of which you know has fifty years fertility, whilst ours can boast but four?" This would be consistent, but this was now impossible. As soon could the sun be made to go back as slavery be re-established in our West-Indian possessions. Large assemblages were lately collected at Exeter-hall to promote the extinction of slavery. The wealth, the talent, and the respectability of the country were present, and a Prince, the first subject in the land, presided over one of them. To forward the object for which the meeting was convened, a ship was sent out, which was named, and properly so named, after that Prince.

"God and good angels guide her in her course,  
"For, not of conquest greedy, nor of gain,  
"Seeks she the distant world."

If the House consented to the present proposition they would raise a cry similar to one which, for what purpose he could not tell, had been raised some time since, and instead of "Stop the Pique," the cry would be "Stop the Albert." On these considerations, not being able to see that any appreciable relief would accrue to the labouring classes from the proposed measure, and thinking no just or solid ground had been made out upon which to rest the allegations as to the effects to be produced, he should have no hesitation in voting for the resolution of his noble Friend the Member for Liverpool.

Mr. *Labouchere* said, Sir, I confess that if the only question before the House, and the only motives which actuated it in the decision to which it was about to come, were those referred to by the noble Lord who has just sat down—and that the case was, that all of us being agreed that we had arrived at a crisis of great commercial and financial difficulty, and upon the course which ought to be pursued the only difference of opinion which existed was, whether or not there were special circumstances applicable to the sugar trade, which ought to exempt it from the application of principles which were allowed to be just and necessary in their application to other branches of industry and commerce,—if, I repeat, that were the state of the question, I should feel—I would not say no interest, but—not the same interest which I now feel as to the ultimate decision of the House on the question before it. But,

because I have seen various symptoms to the contrary—having found that Gentlemen, the representatives of other great protected interests, came forward and said—“This is a case common to us all. We find that there is, on the part of the manufacturing and commercial interests of this country, a growing opinion now forcing itself on the attention of the Legislature, that it is necessary, without any delay, to revise our financial and commercial interests generally.” When I find those who spoke thus prepared to admit no compromise or concession—when I find them opposed to any relaxation of the sugar duties, not from any refined speculations with regard to the slave-trade, but from the consideration that, in defending the duties on sugar, they were at the same time standing out in support of their own monopolies, I freely admit that I look with deep anxiety to the course which the House proposes to pursue with respect to the question before it. I feel too deeply the importance of the question to mix it up with any party considerations, or any of the political taunts which has been bandied from one side of the House to the other. I would, at the same time say, that accusations have been brought against the party with whom I have the honour to act, of which it was fit some notice should be taken. It has been repeatedly asserted, that though the Whigs always talked of free-trade, they never, whilst in office, carried any measures in accordance with its principles, whilst the Tories, when they proposed liberal measures, were sure to carry them through. Now, I think, this admits of a very easy solution. I have been long enough a Member of this House to recollect Mr. Huskisson's efforts on this subject. I very well recollect—and no one can say that I am guilty of misrepresentation in saying what I am about to say—I very well recollect when Mr. Huskisson brought forward those great, wise, and sagacious measures, which will ever endear his name to the people of this country, with what sullen, reluctant acquiescence, his views were received by his own party, while he had throughout, the honest, cordial, warm support of those who were his political opponents. They thought that it was not fitting to raise petty cavils against the details of those great measures; they knew what an arduous task it was, to introduce great

changes into the commercial policy of this country; they thought that was not an occasion on which to raise petty cavils, and though many Members who then sat in opposition to the Government considered that Mr. Huskisson's plans did not quite carry out their principles, yet they decided that it was but just to that great statesman to abstain from embarrassing him with objections; they felt it to be their duty to give him their cordial and disinterested support. I think that this difference of conduct between the leading men of the two parties on this occasion and on that which I have referred to, may perhaps account for some of the taunts which have been thrown out this evening against the Whigs in respect of their conduct with regard to free-trade. The Government has been told by the hon. Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Colquhoun) that they had brought forward no measure of commercial policy of importance during the ten years they had been in office. Now, in reply to this, I may mention one measure which I remember, and which I think the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, (Lord Stanley) and the right hon. Member for Pembroke (Sir J. Graham) must also remember, and which was really a very great measure of commercial policy; and what was its fate? I allude to the question of the timber duties—a measure which let me say, very closely resembled the same subject which was soon about to be submitted to the House, and which, if it had been carried then, it is my belief would have been of the greatest benefit to the country. But unfortunately that was not the case. It was quite true that the right hon. Member for Tamworth, and those who acted with him, did not oppose it on principle, but they took that convenient course which is almost always taken by those who wished to defeat a measure in this House without compromising themselves; they stated, that they were not satisfied with the existing state of information on the subject, and proposed to refer it to a committee up stairs; and, because that proposal was not acquiesced in, the measure fell to the ground.—That reception was not very encouraging to the Government to proceed in the introduction of measures of like character; and for my own part I must say that I cannot but feel that it is no slight evil to bring forward measures of this kind, involving great changes in our complicated commercial

system, unless they can be brought to a successful issue. Yes; I think that in these circumstances nothing could have justified her Majesty's Government in bringing forward a measure of the kind I am speaking of, unless they had felt that there had arisen an imperative demand by the country for the adoption of such a change, and unless it were clear, that nothing short of such a change could restore the revenue and commerce of this country to a state of prosperity. But I say, that although I am myself a strong party man, and though I wish to see the party to which I have the honour to belong maintained in power, yet so convinced am I of the necessity of introducing, with a view to the support of the commerce of the country, a thorough and searching reform into our commercial system, that I should think it the happiest day of my life on which I saw those to whom I have always been politically opposed acting on those principles if they come to be seated in power, and I trust that in such a case I should give them as cordial a support on these questions as I now give to those to whom I am attached by every political and personal tie. But perhaps I am wandering too far from the subject before the House. I will begin, then, by relieving her Majesty's Government from the charge which has been brought against them more than once in the course of the evening. It has been stated, that the Government has dealt unfairly by the great interests which were principally concerned in their measures; that those great interests had been taken by surprise; that the conduct and language of Ministers had led those great interests to suppose that no such alteration as was now proposed had ever been contemplated; and an hon. Gentleman opposite, and East-India director (Mr. Hogg), has done me the honour to quote a speech of mine on a former occasion, which the hon. Gentleman stated was quite inconsistent with the course now pursuing by her Majesty's Government. But I think I have a right to complain of the manner in which the hon. Gentleman has quoted me; for really a more garbled account of a speech I believe was never given. The hon. Gentleman studiously excluded every part of the speech which made against the views he was endeavouring to fix upon me. The quotation was every bit on one side. The right hon. Member for Tamworth also quoted that speech, but he quoted it fair-

ly; and has done me the justice to state, that there was nothing in that speech which precluded me from taking the course which I am now taking. But there are other facts which show that these parties were by no means taken by surprise. The right hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn) has, no later than this evening, presented fifteen petitions from merchants and others in Jamaica, and other West-India islands, in which the petitioners stated that they were in the full expectation that the Government was about to pursue the course which it was now taking. I must say, that it was with some surprise that I found these petitions presented just at the present moment, but it turned out they had lain by for some time in the drawer of the right hon. Gentleman, in order to their being let off at a juncture when they might be useful. I have myself seen many gentlemen from the West-Indies at different times on this subject, and when they have asked me to say whether her Majesty's Government had any intention of altering the sugar duties in the course of this Session, I have always said that I could give no pledge of the sort; that they must judge for themselves, and that Government must be left perfectly free to act as might seem best to them. But, besides this, I would ask the House to listen to what I am going to read, and say, whether it did not amount to a complete announcement on the part of the Government of what were their general views on this subject. In the year 1839, my right hon. Friend, Lord Sydenham, then Mr. Poulett Thomson, and President of the Board of Trade, spoke thus on the subject of the sugar duties. My right hon. Friend then said, that he considered the subject as one "of very great importance, and deserving the most serious attention. He admitted, that it was a matter of very great importance, and one which would be forced upon the attention of Parliament and of the country within a very short period. In the first place, this was a matter which would force itself upon the attention of the Government as connected with the treaty with the Brazils. The present treaty was only of a temporary character and would expire in 1842, and if we entered into fresh relations with that important state, this subject must necessarily be considered. The exports to that country were upwards of 4,000,000*l.* a-year of British

manufactures. This was the most important trade that we carried on, with the exception of the United States of North America. The produce of the Brazils was almost entirely confined to sugar and coffee, and when we came to the period when the treaty was about to expire, this subject must force itself upon the attention of the House. The other branch of the subject was also become a matter of deep importance, and ought to receive great consideration—namely, the short supply of colonial sugar.” My right hon. Friend concluded by saying, that “the Government was deeply impressed with this important subject, and it was obvious, that great attention must be paid to this point, as well as to the other subjects to which he had adverted. It was important that they should look at this question—that they should regard the different interests that would be involved by blinking the consideration of it even for a time. But he was satisfied that it must be forced on the attention of the Government and the Legislature, if not by the wants of the people of this country, at any rate by the treaty with the Brazils, and he trusted that it would be met fairly, and the difficulty dealt with in the way that a matter of such importance deserved when it was ripe for consideration.” Such was the statement on this subject of Mr. Poulett Thomson, in 1839, and I contend, that, consistently with the reserve which every Government ought to maintain on matters of trade, it is scarcely possible to give more clear notions of the intentions of Government than those which different Members of the Government have stated at different times to the House. Coming now to another branch of the question, I must say, that I should have thought, that I should have been almost relieved from the necessity of arguing the propriety of effecting some change in the sugar duties, with reference to the convenience of the consumer and the increase of the revenue. It appears to me, that on all general principles a differential duty greatly exceeding fifty per cent. is so unsound that it ought not to continue, and that immediate measures ought to be taken with respect to it; I almost think, that I should waste the time of the House by arguing what seems to me to be so self evident. But, although hon. Gentlemen had said, that the consumer had no great interest in this question, yet I, for one, am not disposed to

undervalue these considerations. Then they were told that sugar was not an article of which the consumption depended very much on the price; that it was rather a luxury, and that the degree in which it was consumed did not depend very much on the price. I observe, that in the year 1839, when Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Grant introduced the subject of the sugar duties, much discussion took place in the House on this subject, and the right hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn) then held that sugars were like wines and silks in this respect, and that the consumption was not materially affected by the price; but I must say, that the arguments of Mr. Huskisson went very far to confute those of the right hon. Gentleman. For my own part I think that there is scarcely any article on which a reduction of price is more likely to increase consumption, and so augment the revenue. I know that at all times details on such subjects as this are repulsive, but I will trespass on the House in this way as little as possible. I have obtained a calculation from the officers of the statistical department of the Board of Trade of the average prices of sugar imported during a series of years, as stated in the *London Gazette*, together with the quantities imported, and the average consumption per head throughout the United Kingdom. These calculations will not be found to agree quite completely with that which had been made by the officers of the Customs, but the discrepancy has arisen from the two calculations having been constructed on different grounds, and as regards the Customs, on what is now acknowledged to be an error, which arises from the manner in which the quantity of refined sugar exported is converted into its equivalent weight of raw sugar; it is to be observed, that this calculation includes also molasses converted into crystalized sugar, and, in short, that the whole embraces all the saccharine matter consumed in the United Kingdom. I will state from this table\* the prices and the quantities consumed by each individual during the years since 1820. In that year the average price was 35s.; the average quantity consumed by each individual in the United Kingdom was 19-9lb. In fact, the actual consumption might be stated at 20lb. per head. In 1831, the average price was 28s. 8d.; the average

\* See Table following page.

consumption fell to 19lb. per head. In 1833, the average price was 29s.; the average consumption was 17·99lb. In 1834, the average price was 29s. 2½d.; the consumption was 18·31lb. In 1835, which was a year affording a remarkable exception to the general rule, the price was 33s. 9½d.; and the increase in consumption was very considerable, the average being 19·21lb. per head. That was an exception to the general rule; but what were the causes of it? The year 1836 was a year of remarkable cheap bread. I quite allow, that the price of bread is a very disturbing cause to reduce the demand for any article not of primary necessity to the working classes, and that at that time the working classes were extremely well off, and able to spend more than usual in articles of this nature; but the inference which I draw from this circumstance is, that it would be most expedient to re-consider our Corn-laws, toge-

ther with the sugar duties. In the year 1836, the average price rose to 40s. 9d.; the average consumption fell to 16·58lb. per head. In 1837, the price fell to 34s. 5d.; the consumption increased to 18·38lb. In 1838 the consumption was much about the same, the price being 33s. 7d.; and the consumption 18·42lb. In 1839, the price was 39s. 4½d.; the consumption 17lb. In 1840, the price was higher than ever, being 48s. 7½d.; and I beg the attention of the House to the fact, that the consumption per head throughout the United Kingdom, fell to 15·28lb. Upon the whole, if they compared the first year of the period I have taken with the last, they would find, that the consumption of sugar per head throughout the United Kingdom had fallen very nearly one-fourth. Now, when they came to consider, that this diminished consumption did not affect the higher classes in any great degree, but that it fell almost wholly upon the lower classes, they had some idea of the severe privation which those classes must have gone through to account for this reduction in the consumption. I find, that Mr. Huskisson, in bringing forward the measures to which I have already referred, said, that he believed two-thirds of the consumers of coffee in the United Kingdom drank it without any sugar at all. But the price was lower then than now, and therefore, I conclude, that the privations suffered now were greater. But I feel, that really this is not a part of the subject on which I need delay the House. I will only say, that though the two sides of the House might differ on matters of nice calculation—though they might differ as to extent in which the consumer was interested in this question—though they might differ as to the amount of addition to the revenue which would be derived from the change, yet, that they were agreed as to the general principle, and with regard to the question of revenue, I am persuaded that if the House were once in Committee, where alone subjects of this nature can be discussed with advantage, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would have no difficulty in convincing the House that his calculations, so far from being sanguine and exaggerated, were, in reality, very moderate. I have conversed on this subject with many persons of competent authority on such matters, in whom not only this Government, but former Go-

*Statement of the quantities of Sugar and of Molasses converted into its Equivalent weight in Crystallised Sugar, that were retained for Home Consumption in the United Kingdom, together with the average Consumption of each Person in the United Kingdom, and the average price of Sugar according to the London Gazette, in each year from 1830 to 1840.*

Year.	Quantities retained for home consumption.			Average consumption of each person in the United Kingdom.	Average Price of Sugar, according to the London Gazette.
	Sugar.	Molasses converted into its equivalent weight in crystallised sugar.	Total.		
	cwt.	cwt.	Stated in cwt. lb.	lb.	s. d.
1830	4,147,260	105,095	4,252,355	19·04	43 6
1831	4,683,677	130,754	4,814,431	20·11	43 6
1832	3,076,677	313,508	3,390,185	19·00	23 6
1833	3,703,128	361,487	4,064,615	17·99	23 6
1834	4,013,019	300,469	4,313,488	18·31	29 2½
1835	4,116,158	533,460	4,649,618	19·21	33 9½
1836	3,070,466	940,405	4,010,871	16·58	40 9
1837	4,157,446	588,007	4,745,453	18·38	34 5
1838	4,090,453	507,269	4,597,722	18·42	33 7
1839	3,284,677	150,987	3,435,664	17·16	39 4½
1840	3,606,038	186,072	3,792,110	15·28	48 7½
Average			4,146,310		33 6

vernments, were accustomed to rely, and those gentlemen are of opinion that, so far as the revenue was concerned, my right hon. Friend is quite justified in the anticipations he has made. I admit, that it is very difficult to foresee what will be the course of the sugar-trade next year. I have endeavoured to inform myself as well as I can on the subject, but I have received from the gentlemen whom I have consulted, and who were the best competent to state an opinion, such conflicting estimates, that I find it very difficult to come to any decision. I will state how the case stands. I have taken the petition of the merchants, planters, and others connected with the West Indies, and resident in London, which has been presented by the right hon. Member for Tamworth, and I find that they stated the stock of sugar in hand at 35,000 tons; and they said that they expected 115,000 tons to arrive in the next year from the West Indies, 30,000 tons from the Mauritius, and 62,000 tons from the East Indies, making a total of 242,000 tons altogether. This was the opinion of very competent persons. But on the other, the noble Lord opposite (Viscount Sandon), with a deputation of Liverpool merchants, visited me, all of them gentlemen very able and well qualified to form an opinion on the subject, being Bengal and West-India merchants, and when they were asked what was the probable expectation of the amount of sugar that would be consumed next year, made a statement, which I requested them to put into writing, and in which I find a considerable discrepancy from that of the London merchants. They both, of course, stated the stock in hand at 35,000 tons, and both agreed in taking 115,000 tons as the probable import from the West Indies; but then they computed the product of the Mauritius at 10,000 tons higher than the London merchants had done; and that of the East at 70,000 tons, while the London merchants had put it as 62,000 tons. The variations were considerable; but there could be no doubt of this general fact, that a very great supply was coming from the East Indies. I am induced, by this very circumstance, to come to the conclusion, that it is important to revise the sugar duties, and put them on a sound and wise footing. If no other consideration could have induced me, I would have been induced by the manner in which capital has been attracted by the

extravagant prices of last year, and is now rushing into the East Indies, because I am perfectly satisfied, that such a state of things must lead to the worst results for those who embark their capital in such speculations. The nature of the sugar supply from the East Indies is this—it is itself a great sugar-consuming country, and only sends us what it cannot use itself. They had been attracted to send their sugar to England by the known deficiency in the British supply. But when the prices fall here, the supply from India is at once cut off. It is not like the West Indies, which must send over every pound of sugar they produce. If we view this question as a matter of trade, I am satisfied, that we will find, that the best course to pursue, for our colonies and our trade, as well as for the consumer in England, is to put these duties upon a sound and stable footing, giving to our colonists whatever reasonable protection we think the circumstances of the case require; but not an extravagant amount of protection, an amount which, whether in the sugar or in any other trade, will never be found to be really advantageous, even to the monopolists themselves. I see no reason why those principles, which are of sound application to other trades, should not be so to the sugar-trade. I now come to that point which is mainly relied upon by hon. Members opposite. I mean the relation of this question with slavery and the slave-trade. I do not stand here to make light of objections founded upon these considerations. I will address no reproach to my right hon. Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, who urged in the course of these debates the same arguments which I have often heard from that right hon. Gentleman before—very far from it—I have listened to him with most sincere respect, although I cannot acquiesce in the conclusion to which he has come. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to re-consider the grounds on which he arrived at that conclusion. I heard him say, when replying to an argument addressed to him by an hon. Member as to his inconsistency in not applying to cotton and tobacco the same principles which he applied to sugar, that the reason of the distinction he drew was his determination to adopt practical and reasonable means for the accomplishment of the great end which he had in view, and that he would not go out of the bounds of rea-



son and common sense. I am prepared to argue the question with him on these grounds; and think I will be able to prove, considering the subject in that light, that there is no solid foundation for the distinction which he has drawn: It was undoubtedly perfectly true that hitherto they had prohibited the introduction of foreign sugar into the British market, and that it did not stand upon the same footing as cotton and tobacco. But when they came to examine the grounds on which this distinction was made, they would find them to be possessed of but little solidity. When they were told that if they took Brazilian sugar, they would be encouraging the growth of sugar the produce of slave labour, it was worth while to inquire what was the effect of the system which they were now pursuing. They exported each year a large quantity of British manufactured goods to the Brazilian markets. How were these goods paid for? They were paid for in slave labour produce, and especially sugar. It is true that they do not bring that sugar to be consumed in England; but they took it to other countries, or else they brought it to be refined in England, and then taken out in its refined state for the purpose of being sold in other countries. I cannot really see where is the difference. It is true, that by forbidding the direct importation, we are embarrassing, in an extreme degree, the trade of our own country; we limit and reduce the amount of manufactured goods exported to the Brazils, and it is plain from the representation of the Brazilian merchants, that the consumption of our manufactures there is diminishing, and that if we do not alter our system, they will soon dwindle to comparative insignificance. But we do not the less, for every bale of goods which we import to the Brazils, receive payment in slave produce, which is brought either to our own or to other countries. This question was argued at great length in 1829. I beg to remind the House of the proposition which was then made, and the opinions expressed by eminent public men. In 1829, Mr. Grant (the present Lord Glenelg) brought forward his motion upon sugar, which was to reduce the duty upon colonial sugar to 20s. per cwt., that upon East India sugar to 25s., and that upon foreign sugar to 28s., leaving a differential duty, in favour of our colonial sugar, of 8s. per cwt. The protection

which Government now proposed was much larger, being 12s. per cwt. Mr. Grant had immediately before held the situation of President of the Board of Trade, and he said,

"When I was President, I brought this proposition before the Cabinet, of which I was a Member, and received its assent to the principle; the only difference between us being as to the time of bringing it forward as a question of revenue."

It would be unfair to say, that the circumstances were precisely the same. They had not then passed the Emancipation Act. But there was this common point between the two cases:—The slave-trade, which was the strength of their argument, was at that time rife to Cuba and the Brazils, and the argument in this respect remained the same. The West India interest, too, at the period referred to, had come forward vehemently to oppose the measure; and their arguments did not then appear quite so conclusive to hon. Gentlemen opposite as they do now. The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Cambridge, was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and said that, though he might differ from Messrs. Grant and Huskisson, he did not differ from them upon any matter of principle, but upon one of calculation. The argument derived from the trade to Brazil has been so admirably answered by Lord Glenelg, that I will read an extract from the speech which he made upon that occasion. No one who knew that statesman would represent him as unscrupulous, or as one disposed to overlook the evils of the slave-trade; for if ever there was a conscientious and pure-minded public man, Lord Glenelg was that man:—"On the subject," he said, "of opening the trade in foreign sugar, it is said, that we would be opening new sources for the encouragement of the slave-trade. The amount of such encouragement (if encouragement it could be called) would be small indeed, since no foreign sugar could enter the market till ours rose to a much higher price than it could ordinarily be expected to arrive at. And in fact, without reference to these contingencies, we are at this moment as completely encouraging the slave-trade as we could be supposed to be under the proposed plan. Take the Brazils for instance. Our exports to Brazil last year were to the amount of 3,820,000*l.* and the imports thence were 1,380,000*l.*, the difference

being nearly 2,500,000*l.* Now, I would wish to know what becomes of those two millions and a-half of money. They were manifestly paid in the produce of Brazil—the produce, be it remembered, of slave-labour—and carried in British vessels to foreign markets. In fine, my plain proposition is, that it will give improvement to the comforts of society in this country.” This proposition was made to a Cabinet to which the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Tamworth, belonged, and in this proposition the right hon. Member for Cambridge University, speaking as Chancellor of the Exchequer, declared that he acquiesced in principle, and differed from it only as a matter of calculation. I quite agree that it is of the utmost importance that no foreign country should be led to believe that we were relaxing our desire to suppress the slave-trade. But I do believe, that this putting forward of unfounded reasons would lead persons to believe, that they rather made this question a pretext and screen for other questions, than were *bond fide* asserting a great principle. I have already alluded to the advice given by Mr. Poulett Thomson, to apply themselves to this subject, at the approach of the close of the treaty with the Brazils. I have heard with great surprise from Members representing great manufacturing districts attempts to depreciate our foreign trade. They say, that our home trade is very valuable, and also our colonial trade, but that there is no necessity for looking so nearly to our foreign trade. I have heard this with great surprise. It would be a fatal error to undervalue our foreign trade. In 1839 the total amount of our exports to the East-Indies and the colonies was 16,700,000*l.*, while the total amount of our exports to other parts of the world was 36,507,000*l.* Thus it was perfectly plain that they could not materially cripple their foreign trade without producing such effects upon their commerce and industry, upon the peace and welfare of the country, as it was fearful to contemplate. They would form no adequate idea of the trade with the Brazils if they looked merely to the present amount of their exports. A most remarkable change was going on in that country. Some of the greatest rivers on the face of the earth flowed through that country, affording boundless facilities for internal communication. North America

had no advantages in this respect, compared with those of South America. The mighty element of steam power was only in its infancy in the Brazils, and it was impossible to calculate the wide extension to which commerce might there attain. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was so fully impressed by the importance of these considerations, that he has opened negotiations with the Brazilian government to secure moderate and reasonable transit duties upon their rivers for the trade of this country. The House would recollect that the treaty into which they had entered with the Brazilian government was most advantageous, securing no higher import than 15 per cent. *ad valorem* upon British goods, and guaranteeing to us the payment of no higher duty than any other country. This treaty expired, according to the construction of the Brazilian government, in 1842. According to our interpretation of the correctness of which, after full consultation, I entertain no doubt, it does not expire until 1844; but there appeared to be a most erroneous opinion very generally prevalent in Brazil that it will expire in 1842. The legislature of that country has a strong feeling of irritation against us with regard to the course which we have pursued in obtaining the most liberal concessions for our own commerce, and keeping up almost prohibitory duties upon the articles which they send us. This state of things weighed so much with me, that some time since I wrote a letter to noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, suggesting to him whether it would not be desirable, considering the immense interests at stake, to endeavour to enter into negotiations at once with the government of Brazil, and perhaps not to insist upon the continuance of the present treaty to the full term to which we were entitled, if for financial or other reasons the Brazilian government might desire to put an end to it, provided we might come to some arrangement which should place our commercial relations with that country on a safe, equitable, and permanent basis, and of mutual benefit to both parties. I feel it to be my duty to state these views, that it may not be supposed that it is quite safe to put the matter off for two years longer, and trust to carry out our own interpretation of its non-expiring before the year 1844. There is another way of considering this

subject to which I must call the attention of the House for a moment. I have before attempted to prove, that this country gained very little—nothing worth considering, with regard to discontinuing slavery, by conducting her trade with Brazil in a circuitous, instead of a direct, mode. Now, that is really the only distinction between the two plans. But if they acted on this principle at all, they ought steadily and purposely to discourage all trade between this country and the Brazils, because that was the only way in which they could avoid encouraging the industry of that country and her slave-trade. But if they applied that principle to sugar, why did they not extend it to other articles? Let them take the instance of coffee. The present system of duty with regard to that article was generally acknowledged to be one of the most absurd that could be adopted—but not only that, it was eminently unjust with regard to Brazil and every other coffee-growing country in the West. How did we treat their coffee? There were two scales of duty, such that coffee by touching at the Cape of Good Hope came to this country at a less duty than if it came in a contrary direction. Java coffee, therefore, by touching at the Cape, which was not much out of its way to this country, paid a less duty, while the coffee of Brazil must go half-way round the globe to obtain the same advantage. We have engaged by treaty to treat the produce of the Brazils on the footing of that of the most favoured nation; but while we adhere to the letter of that engagement, we avoid its spirit by this arrangement of our coffee duties. But there is another point which I think the House ought to consider. I am of opinion that it is the duty of this country by every practicable means in her power, by persuasion and by her influence, to attempt the entire suppression of the slave-trade. I then ask the House to consider whether it is more likely they will achieve that object by refusing all commercial intercourse with a nation that supported slavery than by encouraging those commercial relations, by inducing Englishmen to go there with English habits and English feelings, diffusing far and wide the intelligence and civilization of this country. It was but the other day that the Government had to decide a question much of the same description. The state of Texas made an offer to this coun-

try to enter into a commercial treaty. The Government thought it right to make such a treaty. They felt satisfied that it was their duty to do so; but did they lose sight of that cause which they knew to be so dear to the people of England—I mean the cause of the slave-trade? No. My noble Friend, the Foreign Secretary, in expressing his willingness to sign the treaty, said he was willing to do so, but, at the same time, the state of Texas must bind itself to give to this country that which all allowed to be the most effectual means of suppressing the slave-trade—the right to search, and the noble Lord made that a *sine qua non* of the treaty. That is the way, I say, in which British influence may be employed most beneficially in the advancement of the principles of justice and humanity; and a much better mode it is, than by crippling the industry and commerce of the country. There is also another point of view in which this question may be considered. If this measure had been brought forward by itself, I could well understand hon. Gentlemen saying, “after all, any alteration in sugar will produce a general impression, though not very well founded, perhaps, that you are not standing on the same ground with regard to the slave-trade as hitherto.” I understand that, and I think this was one of the reasons which has hitherto justified the Government for having permitted the state of the sugar duties to remain so long unaltered. Since the year 1829, no measure has been passed for the purpose of altering them; but I think it is brought forward as a very different measure when it is proposed as part of a great whole, when foreign countries see that this is not being done with reference to sugar only, but that on general grounds the Government of this country is advised to reform her whole commercial tariff. It would, then, be absurd to exclude the article of sugar from that revision. There was, in my opinion, a sufficient reason why the Government did not think it desirable last year to make this change; but this year the whole financial and commercial state of the country justifies them in making it. I began by stating that, important as this subject was, if I could really believe the House was disposed to decide it on its own merits only, and no other question was involved in it, I should not attach to it such a degree of importance as I did,

but it is because I cannot help thinking that the decision the House comes to will be a decision on far greater and more important subjects than I look to with an anxiety which no language of mine can express. I am not at all disposed to hold forth the language of despondency with regard to the future state of the country, for I know that in her situation, in her minerals, and in her wealth, she possesses great advantages over other countries; and I believe, that the most valuable of all her possessions is the most indomitable energies of her people; but I feel it is not wise, not humane, to tax those energies too heavily. I say this country has arrived at one of those revolutions in commerce, at one of those crises in financial affairs that would either lead to great good or incalculable evil. The name of Mr. Huskisson has been often mentioned in the course of the debate. Happily for this country, that right hon. Gentleman was in the councils of the Crown on a very similar occasion, when he found a state of things requiring great alteration. Boldly did he propose it, and he was supported, not by any mere party, but by the general sense of the leading statesmen of this country—by men who felt, that the welfare of the country, and a regard for their own fair fame, was of more consequence to them than any mere temporary or party considerations. And that great and necessary reform was proposed and supported, and encouraged, and carried into effect, in spite of that opposition which such measures must always provoke. A great revolution had then taken place in the commercial, political, and financial state of the world; and I am satisfied that we have now arrived at a period very similar, in which there is the choice either to adapt the laws to that altered state of circumstances, or sustain the greatest possible inconvenience and mischief. It would be going into too wide a field to enter into particular instances; but I am sure that any commercial gentleman will readily admit, there are many points in which great changes are desirable with regard to our commerce. This country has foreign rivals, who more and more, year by year, are rendering her less able to compete with them in many important branches of trade; they not labouring under the same disadvantages. I feel this so strongly, that if the House should agree to the measures now proposed to

them by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it will be my duty in the Customs bill of the year to recommend other measures of great consequence. I must beg the House to observe, that it is entirely impossible to do this without encountering some protected interests. They were bound to make those changes with all fair and due consideration; but at the same time, it was quite impossible to make them really and thoroughly without encountering opposition, and, perhaps, injuring some interests. The moment that was done, what was the answer? The persons interested said, "yes, that is all very well, but why are we to be sacrificed?" And then they pointed to other great monopolists, and argued, and argued justly, that it would be hard that the same principles should not be applied to them. With regard to this whole subject, I can only say, I never remembered a period when there existed in the mercantile and manufacturing community of this country so general an impression on any question not brought forward for party purposes, or by any party man, nor conducted in a manner in which party measures were generally carried on, but having for its end a far more serious and important object. In former years, when the Corn-laws were debated in this House, I have observed the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, has always referred to the accounts of the exports, and always said, "This cannot be true, that your manufacturers are in such distress, for your exports continue to increase." Now, I say it with great regret, that argument will fail in the present year. The exports from this country during the last year have much decreased, and the more the House examines into them, the greater will be found the cause for apprehension, unless they relieve the weight that now oppresses the industry and energies of the country. During the last year, as compared with the year preceding the value of the exports has much fallen off, to the amount of about a million and a-half; in earthenware in the one year the value of the exports was 771,000*l.*; in the last year, has fallen off to 574,000*l.* In hardware, the former was 1,800,000*l.*; this has decreased to 1,300,000*l.* and in woollen goods it has decreased from 6,271,000*l.* to 5,336,000*l.* In cotton yarn there is an exception; but that has gone to feed the manufactories

of other countries. One manufacture of this country, however, has increased; it is the manufacture of refined sugar. I can understand hon. Gentlemen drawing a distinction between coffee and sugar, and articles of that kind; but how can they draw distinctions between sugar consumed in this country and sugar prepared here to be consumed in other countries? But refining sugar has been one of the most flourishing branches of our manufactures. In the one year it was only 209,000lb. in the other year it was 444,000lb. And that led to a point extremely well deserving the attention of the House in considering this subject. It was said, if you put sugar on a reasonable footing, you will make England the entrepot of all the sugar in the world. I have the opinion of Mr. Huskisson on that point, who in the debate of 1829 attached the greatest importance to it. That right hon. Gentleman said—

“We had advantages for sugar refining which no other country possessed; and if the system of duty was reasonable, foreign sugars would be brought here, and that which all must admit would be desirable would be attained, namely, England would become the great market for all the sugars of the world.”

I have stated, I believe, that the merchants and manufacturers of this country feel the greatest apprehension on this subject, and they have expressed that most distinctly to the House. But one very remarkable petition has been addressed to that House by the merchants of London. I heard with some astonishment the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, the other night, in presenting a counter petition against the plan of her Majesty's Government, and I believe on this very subject, state that many of the most respectable merchants who had signed the first petition had also signed that one. I feel it to be my duty to call the attention of the House to what the petition was. I have done so once already, but after what was stated by the right hon. Baronet I cannot help reverting to it again. The petition of those Gentlemen was, I believe, by far the most important with regard to signatures that had been presented to that House since the memorable one presented by Lord Ashburton, immediately before Mr. Huskisson's commercial reform, and it stated, that the present restrictive and prohibitory duty was highly detrimental to the commercial interests of the country;

that if there were a revision of the Customs' duties, the petitioners believe the revenue would be increased, that trade would be promoted, and the merchant shipping extended; and that their opinion was strengthened by the satisfactory evidence that had been taken before the select committee of the House on the important subject of the import duties, and by the report of that committee; and they therefore prayed the House to make such an alteration in the excessive restrictive and prohibitory duties, as would be beneficial both to the merchant and the consumer, and also promote the trade and the interests of the country. I will leave it to the House to say with what degree of consistency and candour Gentlemen could, after that, sign any counter-petition, and say they were opposed to the plan of the Government. How could Gentlemen say they had read the report of the select committee on imports, and that they agreed to that report, but with the exception of sugar, timber, and corn? I certainly was surprised to hear, that Gentlemen could adopt such a course. It appeared to me, indeed, to be so foolish as to be almost impossible. Those Gentlemen might have made exceptions in their own particular cases; for instance, the West-India merchant might have excepted sugar, the timber merchant Canadian timber, and the agriculturist corn; so that those particular exceptions might have been made, although they agreed to the general principle. All I can say upon that point is, that in dealing with a whole system, as a whole, they must not attempt that kind of piecemeal legislation which it might be alleged, with great plausibility, was unfair and unjust. Upon these grounds, I hope the House will abide by the recommendations of this important petition, instead of that which was presented by the right hon. Baronet opposite. It may be said, that although it might be well to do the things therein recommended, it would take a long time to accomplish them. But the country is now in that state which renders delays extremely dangerous. I can assert, that it is the general opinion of the merchants and manufacturers of the country, that those things must be done, and done speedily, if they are to continue to prosper and to flourish. There is one other consideration connected with the subject to which I shall slightly advert. I allude to

our finances. It so happens that the present crisis arises just as it becomes necessary to make an effort to repair those finances; and if we turn that necessity to a good account, it will, in my opinion, be the most fortunate circumstance that ever befel this country. If we meet that necessity with bold, but at the same time prudent measures, embracing commercial alterations, I believe that immense benefit may accrue from it to the country. Independently of that consideration, however, the subject is surely one which deserves to be well and seriously weighed by the House. The deficiency in the revenue may be supplied by a loan; but I concur in the very just sentiments frequently expressed upon that by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. I concur with him in thinking, that nothing could be more unworthy of a Government, or more fatal to the interests of the country, than in time of peace, to be adding materially to our permanent debt, and making no effort by other means to supply the deficiency. What then remains? Direct taxation on the people. To apply direct taxation under such circumstances as the present is a course which I never should feel myself justified, as a Minister of the Crown, in proposing, or as a representative of the people, in supporting. What the Government now proposes to do will supply the deficiency, not only without imposing fresh taxes on the people, but by actually relieving them from a portion of the burdens they were already enduring. I have that confidence in the integrity and spirit of the people of this country that they would cheerfully submit to taxation whenever it could be shown to be necessary, either for supporting the establishments of the country or maintaining our character as a nation; but I do not believe, that they would cheerfully submit to taxation if they supposed that the money could be obtained by other means, particularly when recourse to those means would actually afford them relief. These are opinions which are becoming more and more general through the country, and these are questions which are not now confined to political economists. There is a spirit of inquiry abroad upon them which must be satisfied; and, however this House may for the present refuse to go into the question, depend upon it they cannot always do so. The people of England bear with just and natural impa-

ience those burdens which they conceive to be imposed upon them, not for the purpose of supplying the national treasury, not for the purpose of maintaining the honour, the interests, or the dignity of the country, but for the purpose of unduly favouring particular classes. I conceive that the course which the House takes on the present occasion will be a reply to the country as to the view they take upon the subject. For myself I can only say, that I feel it to be the duty of the Government to bring the question before the House; that, placed as they are under the necessity of providing for the financial wants of the country, finding at the same time those views entertained by the commercial and manufacturing classes of the country respecting the alteration of our commercial system, and having, after mature consideration, completely satisfied myself that these views are founded in justice and in reason, I certainly do feel, that the Government would have been wanting in their duty to the House and to the country if they had not brought the question fairly and comprehensively before them. What the decision of the House may be, it is not for me to anticipate; but of this I am certain, that, though the measures of her Majesty's Ministers may not triumph to-day, there is that justice and soundness in the principles upon which they are founded that of their ultimate success no doubt can be entertained.

*Mr. W. E. Gladstone:* Sir, it will be a consolation to the House, at this late hour of the night, to be informed, that I shall discard altogether from my consideration a large portion of those topics which the right hon. Gentleman has introduced in the course of his speech. It is not indeed my intention to insinuate, even in the remotest degree, that the right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to escape from the discussion of the question actually before the House, by a diversion to matters extraneous and irrelevant, for I am quite sure, that the right hon. Gentleman is altogether incapable of such a subterfuge; but still I cannot help expressing my astonishment at the number and variety of topics falling under that description, and at their total want of bearing on the question really in debate. Sir, I am not here to contest or to discuss with the right hon. Gentleman, the principles of trade—I decline them altogether—they are not upon the present occasion legitimately before the

House. The motion now proposed to the House by her Majesty's Government is to go into committee, with a view to considering a reduction in the sugar duties, which is intended to form a part of a general revision of our system of import duties. The amendment to that motion offered by my noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool, speaks to this effect: that the sugar duties are not a fit subject for such alteration, by no means on account of any principles of trade, but for reasons connected with other and higher principles, which must be disposed of before principles of trade can with reason be brought to bear upon the case. To my mind, Sir, the subject thus limited affords ample matter for the consideration of the House, without entering at all on that wider field, and in my view of the case it is to this subject in this province, and not to the general policy of our import duties, that the House should direct its attention. Indeed, Sir, so far as regards the general phrases in which the right hon. Gentleman has stated his principles of trade, I find in them little or nothing that seems to me liable to objection. The language of the right hon. Gentleman, I think, was this: that he disapproved of monopoly with regard to the products of the colonies of this country, and that he wished to substitute for it a fair and reasonable protection. Now who, Sir, I should like to ask, who in this House, is prepared to contest such a proposition?

Who is prepared to maintain, that the consumer at home must buy exclusively from the colonial producer, and that if the supply be unequal to his wants, he is still to have no other resort? No doubt, Sir, such doctrine may be ascribed to Gentlemen on this side of the House by their opponents; but it is an ascription wholly inconsistent with truth, and one that it will be found difficult indeed to sustain by anything in the nature of evidence. But now, Sir, to come to the question which, as I have contended, is that legitimately before the House. The right hon. Gentleman has argued, that the adoption of the plan proposed by the Government would confer advantage on the consumer, would increase the revenue, and would give increased scope to the industry of the manufacturer. We, Sir, argue, that with an amount of benefit to the revenue altogether inconsiderable, with a slight, nay an imperceptible relief to the consumer, and with detriment to the sure interests of the British manufacturer, you are asked to abandon what is nothing less than a great principle of hu-

manity, that has received the most solemn sanction of the Legislature, the principle of hostility to the slave-trade and to slavery. The right hon. Gentleman has said, that plenty of sugar will be obtained under the projected scale, either of colonial or of foreign growth; but the question is which it is to be? If an abundance of sugar, the growth of our own possessions can be had, how are the Government to be justified in making the present proposition? Now, Sir, with respect to the advantage which it is proposed to realise for the consumer, I do not deny the object to be reasonable and desirable; but what is the amount of benefit which may be expected? I have made the most searching inquiries in my power into the question, what fall in price would probably follow the adoption of the scale of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the results very nearly correspond with those which were stated on Friday night by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, although I should estimate the reduction somewhat, not greatly, higher than he did. But I have a right to measure his boon to the consumer by the statement which he himself made of its amount. He placed it at 1s. 6d. per cwt. He said foreign sugar of a given quality is to be had at 22s.; adding 37s. 6d. for duty, we have a price of 59s. 6d. per cwt. British sugar of the same quality might, he considered, be purchased at a price, including 25s. duty, of 61s. or from that to 62s. Upon this he promised a relief of 1s. 6d. to the consumer. Now, does the noble Lord seriously think that the prospect of such a reduction justifies the expectations which his speech was calculated to excite on the part of the suffering labourers of England? I had always understood it to be an admitted principle of Governments in this country, and a wise one, that those at the head of affairs should, above all things, be cautious of raising hopes on the part of the people which it is obvious are not to be realized. But such does not appear to be the principle of the present Administration. What comfort can it afford to the poor weaver of Bolton, upon whom so much verbal sympathy has been lavished in the course of this debate, nay, is it not rather a mockery and an aggravation of his hardships, to be told that the price of sugar should indeed be reduced, but by an amount of reduction so small, that it cannot possibly reach to the minute quantities in which he consumes it. On this point, Sir, I will cite an authority whom the noble Lord is bound to respect,

the authority of Mr. Macgregor. In his evidence before the committee of last year, on Import Duties, Mr. Macgregor stated, that any reduction in the price of sugar which did not bring it down by at least 1d. in the pound, would be totally unavailing for the relief of the poor, who purchase in fractions of the pound. So much for the effect to be expected from a reduction of 1s. 6d. per cwt. But what has now become even of that reduction? While the noble Lord was speaking that speech, there appeared a new number of the *London Gazette*, announcing that the average which had immediately before stood at 37s. 7½d., and had been so quoted by the noble Lord, had now fallen to 36s. 1d. Thus the advantage promised by the noble Lord to the working classes has at this moment entirely vanished. Now, Sir, with respect to the increase of revenue which it is promised that we shall secure, I confess that I was astonished to find the Chancellor of the Exchequer, under the plea of preferring a plain statement, and of a sort of friendly apprehension lest he should puzzle and bewilder the House of Commons with over many figures if he put them in possession of his calculations, proposing to raise an additional revenue from sugar to the extent of 700,000l. annually, by the simple operation of lowering the duty on foreign sugars from 63s. to 36s. per cwt., without laying before the House a single *datum*, or any of the grounds on which he had founded his calculation and by means of which we might test it. The House will, of course, distinguish between that increase in revenue which will doubtless take place under the law as it now stands, from increased supply, and as consequent thereupon a fall in prices and an augmented consumption, and the additional increase to be expected from an alteration in the duties. The Government has a right to take credit for the latter only, in arguing for this plan: but it is of great importance that we should well consider the former. The noble Lord was pleased to make himself merry the other night on the subject of the increased supply to be expected from British possessions; and he asked the House what security the producers could give him for that increase. The noble Lord evidently thinks it unreasonable to calculate revenue upon an estimate of the supply to be received during the current year. He thinks this a visionary proceeding. But before the noble Lord again indulges in such merriment, will he

have the goodness to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer who sits beside him, upon what principle if not on this he has calculated the remaining items of his budget? How does the right hon. Gentleman know that he will get his twenty two millions from the Customs, his so many more millions from the Excise? Is it not by estimating the amount of production and importation of articles, of which many depend upon the contingencies of crops and seasons; and is not the dependency of sugar precisely the same? Surely, if the noble Lord were conversant with the practice of British commerce, he would know that such estimates as these were continually made, and that, subject to exceptions under rare casualties, our mercantile men are able, as a general rule by their skill and their experience, to make calculations for the current year with a very considerable degree of certainty. Such are the calculations that have come before the House, with respect to the supply of sugar for 1841. Now the right hon. Gentleman has said, that these estimates vary so much among themselves, that he cannot tell what to make of them. I have seen several of them, and I can perceive no such extraordinary variance. He himself mentioned two: one of them, omitting the 35,000 tons of stock on hand, amounted to 225,000 tons, the other to 207,000 tons, from the East Indies, Mauritius, and the West Indies. Now let the right hon. Gentleman take the lowest of these—the lowest estimate which any person of whatever class has put forward, and I say that this estimate thus reduced upon each of its items, exceeds, notwithstanding, the greatest consumption, that has ever taken place during any year in the United Kingdom; namely, that which took place in the year 1837, and which reached to 197,000 tons. Therefore, Sir, we are fully borne out in the conclusion, that the British consumer will be supplied during the year from British possessions, with an abundance of sugar at fair and reasonable prices. But, indeed, the right hon. Gentleman has himself stated, that we may, beyond all doubt, expect, he did not say a moderate—he did not say an increased—but actually he said, “a very great supply” of sugar from the East and West Indies, during the year. Upon this concession, which has now been made by the right hon. Gentleman, I take my stand. The proposition is one indispensable and all important to the question at issue. For it may reasonably be urged,



that we are not so to compassionate the negro as to forget consideration for our own fellow countrymen, for their wants and their almost essential comforts. In that sentiment I agree. The principle of humanity to the African, may, at a certain point, be met and countervailed, not by any consideration of mere policy, but by a kindred principle of humanity to the Englishman. But I contend, that the Government have failed in showing, that the plan proposed is to relieve the people of England; and, unless it can be shown, that there is a real and severe pressure upon them, then, I say, it is impossible, that the proposers of the plan, can resist the force of the arguments against it, from the encouragement which it has been shown that it affords to the slave-trade, and to slavery. And, indeed, there was a time when there was something like a real distress in this country from the scarcity of sugar. The average price of the last year, was as high as 49s. There was one month of that year, in which it rose to 58s. 3d. Whatever I might have thought of the intrinsic merits of the measure, I should have been less surprised had the right hon. Gentleman then proposed to relieve the consumer. At that time, he refused to do it; and now when the distress has passed away he comes forward with his scheme. Yes, Sir, when the distress has passed away, the price of sugar has now fallen to 36s; the calculations of the noble Lord show, that no reduction from this price is to be expected in consequence of the proposed alteration, from which, however, I would except the fall which I have no doubt would take place in the first instance, through the influence of panic: and yet, under the pretext of relieving the consumer, the Government deliberately propose to forego a great principle on which Parliament and the country have acted with respect to the slave-trade. However, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman said, that we must not place permanent reliance on the East Indies for a supply of sugar. I will not weary the House by stating in detail the grounds which I think may reasonably be urged in verification of the estimated supplies of sugar from the West Indies, Mauritius, and the East Indies; but with reference to the last, I will remind the House, that it is only of very late years, that we have had any considerable sugar trade with India; that Mr. Trevelyan, the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, gave in evidence last year, before the East-India Produce Committee, that

that country supplied a hundred millions of consumers, and could easily supply the whole United Kingdom, nay, the whole world. In addition to this, it should be remembered, that according to the evidence of Mr. Melville, before the same committee, last year, the trade of India labours under a great difficulty, in the want of a medium of remittance; that there is a sum of four millions or thereabouts annually, which must be sent home; and that the trade in sugar to this country goes to supply that medium in the most convenient form, and thus meets the peculiar want to which I refer. So that a variety of reasons combine to justify our expecting from that country a steady, permanent, and increasing supply. But, Sir, when so much has been said respecting cheapness of sugar, as if this were the main consideration by which we ought to be guided, I must refer to another aspect of this part of the case. There was a period of the history of this country, when the people could buy sugar cheaply enough, when they had it at a rate but little above the prices of the continent, and very much lower than according to any calculation it is imagined that they can have it under the plan of the Government. The average price of sugar, during the seven years from 1828 to 1834, was only 27s. 11d. per cwt. The noble Lord does not now propose to reduce it below 36s.; and yet when the price was at 28s., did the people of this country consider that easy price as a justification for continuing the existence of slavery? No, they rose as one man, and demanded its extirpation. It was then plainly represented to them, and every person well informed upon the subject was perfectly aware, that if they abolished slavery, they would have to pay largely for it, not only in the shape of compensation, but likewise in the shape of an increased price for sugar. Every person of common sense believed, whatever other sanguine anticipations he might entertain, that the immediate effect of emancipation must necessarily be to diminish the production of sugar, and, consequently, to enhance the price. Yet they persevered in the work, in the noble work, which they had undertaken, and they added even to these expenses further and heavy charges. And does the noble Lord suppose, that after the experience which the people of this country have now had of the measure of abolition, and of its beneficial effects in practice, they will, for small and paltry advantages, of a pecuniary kind, infinitely

less than those which the system of slavery secured to them, consent to forego the high title and the noble character which they have earned before the whole world, by adopting the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman? No, Sir, never did it happen to me to rise in my place in this House, more effectually supported, not only by an entire and heartfelt conviction of the justice of my cause, but by the certainty, that it cannot fail to triumph; because, in contending for the resolution of my noble Friend, we are borne along upon the strength of a resistless principle, of a principle which, at different times, has come into collision with many interests, and has shattered them all, and one which the people of England are fully determined to observe. Now, Sir, I have said, that this country has maintained and acted upon a great principle with regard to slavery and the slave-trade; and I am not surprised that the remark when uttered and taken without explanation, should have elicited from Gentlemen opposite some tokens of doubt and of difference; because I admit that our opposition to slavery has not at any time been uniform and unqualified. At the same time I argue that there has been a principle in our exclusion of foreign sugar, a principle of magnitude and of moral weight and interest to humanity, and one which it is well worth while to continue to observe. The objection urged from the other side of the House is this—that although it be true that we have excluded sugar, the produce of slave labour, from our markets, yet we have not similarly excluded coffee and cotton. Now, Sir, I do not say that the policy of this country, with respect to coffee and to cotton, has been precisely what it ought to have been. On the contrary, I know it to be the opinion of some whose opinions are entitled to great respect, that, with regard to cotton in particular, if we took proper means to encourage its production in the East Indies, not by bounties and legislative protection, but by local improvements and attention to the mode of cultivation, we might obtain from that quarter a supply more secure than that which we now derive from America, and at least equally advantageous in every other respect. I will, however, at least say, that with regard to cotton, and likewise with regard to coffee, there are some most material distinctions between these and the case of sugar. I will not rely

upon the circumstance, that the admission of slave-grown coffee originated not in any deliberate purpose of the Legislature, but from an evasion of the law, which I believe was quite un contemplated at the time when it was passed. But I will urge this, at least, that the coffee produced by slave labour, which is admitted into our markets, does not displace coffee produced by free labour. Let hon. Gentlemen well observe this—there is, as has been shown, and there is likely to be for some time, more free-grown sugar than will suffice for the consumption of the people of this country; but of coffee of that description there is an actual deficiency. Our consumption of coffee reaches to 28,000,000 lbs. and the entire supply derived from the British possessions is only 17,000,000 lbs. It is a very different thing to admit slave-grown coffee to supply the actual wants of the people, where it cannot discourage the production of the same article by free labour, and to admit slave-grown sugar, which, if it find its way into our markets at all, can only enter by displacing so much sugar, the produce of free labour. This, however, is not all—there are other material distinctions between the two cases; and I might argue much in the same manner with regard to cotton. They are such as these: coffee is an article well adapted for free labour in tropical climates; sugar, on the contrary, is one which seems peculiarly adapted to slave-labour, and to the economy of estates which derive their manual strength from the slave-trade. I believe that the whole process of the cultivation of coffee, from first to last, is one of very light labour, one that suits well the organisation of the family, that affords abundant occupation to women and to children. I may quote, Sir, the case of Hayti. When that island became free, it ceased to export sugar, but it continued to export coffee to no less an extent than 50,000,000 lbs., and it competes advantageously with slave-labour coffee in the markets of the world. Upon the other hand it is sugar, upon which slavery and the slave-trade chiefly depend. The labour of cultivation is not light; it affords comparatively little occupation for women and young persons, it does not meet the natural composition of families, it demands mainly the masculine vigour of the arm of the adult, it holds out a peculiar inducement to gathering together labourers of this description; and thus it tempts men,

the stealers of men, to pass to Africa, to rend families asunder, to seize those who are in the vigour of their age, and such alone, and these, too, chiefly of the male sex. Through this economy of sugar cultivation it is easily seen how closely the slave trade depends upon it, rather it is sugar upon which it is dependent altogether; and I do believe it is not too much to say, that if we could destroy the inducement to pursue the slave-trade for the sake of the production of sugar, so far as cotton and coffee are concerned, that trade, and even slavery itself, would soon die a natural death. These surely are material distinctions of a practical kind; and it is most important, that if, in secondary degrees, or by indirect processes, we have given encouragement to slavery, we should not make that encouragement an excuse or apology for fresh encouragement, and much more if it has been proved, that that which we have hitherto refused to encourage, is that upon which slavery mainly depends. Such being the case, I am justified in asserting that, although we may have admitted slave-grown coffee, yet in excluding slave-grown sugar from our markets, we have been acting upon a most important principle—upon a principle which, since the Emancipation Act, has been deliberately contemplated and entertained by the British people, for which they have knowingly and of full purpose made great sacrifices, and which, as I believe, they are determined resolutely to maintain. However, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman alluded in passing to the fact that we do not refuse to refine slave-grown sugar in bond, and he exclaims against our inconsistency in this particular. Of course, on such an occasion as the present, every inconsistency in our practice is dragged into light, for the wretched purpose of using it as a plea for farther and for more monstrous inconsistency, or in order to substitute an uniformity in wrong for an inconsistent acknowledgment of what is right. Yet, Sir, I must observe, that the case of refining for the use of other countries is materially different from that of consuming the Brazilian sugar; it opens no new market, it affords no new distinct stimulus to production: on these grounds, if I remember right, in the year 1833, the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, argued in favour of permitting the refinement of foreign sugars in bond.

Then the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, went on to say, that whether we did or did not admit Brazilian sugar to consumption, our exports to the Brazils, or a portion of them were at this moment, and would continue to be, paid for in sugar: and he seemed to intend that we should hence, conclude in favour of the proposition of the Government. Sir, I cannot imagine any thing less consequent. If I understand the argument, it is this—we already give so much encouragement to the sugar of the Brazils, we are already so far implicated in the responsibility, that no new responsibility is to be incurred, and consequently no new encouragement afforded by the present proposition. But, then, if such be the ground occupied, what becomes of the boon which the right hon. Gentleman tenders in this measure to the British manufacturer of goods, for the Brazil market, and to the Brazilian producer? But in point of fact, Sir, it is not so: the case is plain: the truth ought not to be concealed and evaded; the market of England is beyond all dispute the greatest and the best sugar market of the world; and therefore it is to the opening of this market that all producers look with the greatest possible anxiety. Even already, Sir, if we may believe the accounts of those who have resided in Cuba, I allude particularly to the authentic work of Mr. Turnbull, the merely remote and undefined speculation that their would be a falling off in our own West Indies, consequent upon the abolition of slavery, has given a powerful stimulus to the production of sugar in that island. Even at this moment the foreign grower is keenly watching over the fence which you have erected about your own colonial production, for the moment when he may find access within it. Mr. Turnbull says, "the practice obtains among the merchants of the country of directing the commanders of ships, to call for orders at some convenient point of the English coast, in which case they are entered in the return of exports from Cuba, as for 'Cowes and a market' although the Continent generally may have been their original, and some particular continental port their ultimate destination." If then it is true that the foreign producer looks with so much anxiety to the possibility of finding entry into England, is it not true that the bearing of this measure upon slavery and the slave-trade is of direct and fearful importance? If he wishes to be admitted in-

to this market, it is on account of the immense consumption of sugar in this country, a consumption which comparatively large as it is, is nevertheless, I believe, capable of even indefinitely great increase. That increased consumption, must require an increased growth; that increased growth requires that there shall be more hands to produce it; and this, if we are to repair to foreign sources for our supplies, means that more and more of the natives of Africa must be borne by the slave-trade from their homes. These are plain undeniable matters of fact, and thus as I conceive is the view of the case before us which common sense will take. Therefore, Sir, I do contend, that the proposition of the Government involves the abandonment of a great principle of British policy, which has been at great cost observed and with considerable steadiness. And now I proceed to complain more warmly still of the proposition as it was originally made on Friday week. The right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has the character of a plain spoken, straightforward man, came down on that evening and announced a scheme by which he proposed to reduce the differential duty upon foreign sugar; but he told us not a word at that period of any scale of differential duties upon different descriptions of foreign sugar; and yet this is what he now proposes; and this most material alteration he has introduced into his plan without any notice whatever to the House; a course to which I trust this House will give no encouragement. Now, Sir, what was the effect of the plan in the shape in which it was first proposed? Its effect would have been not merely to displace a part of our own sugar, which is entirely free-grown, by foreign sugar of which as we know a very large proportion is slave-grown, but further, as between the different descriptions of foreign sugar, I affirm that it tended to give no advantage worth naming to that which is produced by free-labour, and that it was favourable only to that produced by slave-labour. The evidence of this proposition is so clear and simple, that I need not trouble the House many moments with its proof. The House should be aware that there exists a very great difference in the intrinsic value of the foreign sugars, amounting in many cases to no less than 50 per cent.; and it unfortunately happens that whether from superiority of soil, or in the command and combination of labour which slavery affords,

or from whatever other reason, the most valuable sugars are those of slave-growth. The first inequality of all the foreign sugars usually brought here are those of Cuba; the next are those of Brazil, both of these produced exclusively by slave-labour, then come those of Java, of which I cannot clearly ascertain to which class they should be assigned; with those of Siam and Cochin China, and last of all those of Manilla, which three last places are the only places whose growths can be certainly affirmed to be from free-labour. Now let us consider how the plan of the Government would have operated on these several kinds of sugar. I hold in my hand the most recent prices current, as well of our own markets, as of the different parts of the Continent: from these I could easily show, but I will not trouble the House with the figures, that the slave sugar of Cuba exceeds the free-grown sugar of Manilla in price, which is the test of intrinsic power and value, in a great proportion, very commonly reaching to 50 per cent. If, therefore, the Government had intended to give equal terms to these kinds of sugar, they ought to have proportioned the duty to the value. If, then, two articles are to be admitted on the same footing, and the value of one is to that of the other as three to two, it is undeniable that the duty should be in the same proportion. Inasmuch, therefore, as he proposed to lay a duty of 36s. on the least valuable foreign sugar, such as the free-labour sugar of Manilla, he ought by this rule to have imposed a duty of no less than 54s. on the most valuable, namely the white sugars of Cuba, which form, I may add, the great bulk of the produce of that island; and in so doing he would have done no more than strict justice to the foreign grower of free-labour sugar, as compared with the foreign grower of slave-labour sugar. But what was the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman? He proposed a duty of 36s. upon Manilla sugars which were worth perhaps 20s., and at the same time proposed the same duty for Cuba sugars worth 30s., thus practically he would have laid a tax greater by one half upon the cheaper article, that being the article which was the produce of free-labour; so that the effect of this must have been, that while the British market would have been swamped with foreign sugar of slave-growth, scarcely one pound of sugar the produce of free-labour could have entered there. But though the right

hon. Gentleman has altered his scheme in a manner which I think this House ought to discourage—yes, Sir, I do hold that this House ought to discourage such a course, and I believe the right hon. Gentleman will himself agree with me that it is desirable that when Chancellors of the Exchequer announce their budget they should announce the propositions which they really mean to make, and not other propositions, which they are to alter without explanation by a printed paper circulated on the very evening when the discussion is to come on—yet unfortunately the right hon. Gentleman has not altered his plan enough to escape the whole force of the objection which I have just made to it. He proposes to fix the duty on brown and yellow sugars at 36s., and that on white clayed sugars at 42s., making a difference of 6s. to correspond with a difference in value which I have shown would require, for the extreme descriptions, a difference of 18s., so that it still remains true that the free-labour foreign sugars will have but little chance of entry into our markets, and that whatever may come in will almost wholly proceed from Cuba and the Brazils. As to the amount of differential duty which it is proposed to establish in favour of British sugars, I am not discussing this question in the character of one connected with our colonies; if I were discussing it in that capacity, and if I were arguing for a greater protection, it would be a question of one or two shillings more or less, important doubtless, but not fit to be entertained here; it should be considered in a committee of this House: but I am not now regarding the question as one of protection to commerce, it is a question of protection to human liberty and life. And as I have been speaking of dealing fairly by free labour sugar, I must regret that I do not see in his place the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin. He, Sir, has put upon record, in the list of notices of motion, a most interesting testimony of his concern for the welfare of the negro. He means to propose in the Committee of Ways and Means, that the foreign sugar to have access to our markets shall be exclusively free labour sugar. Sir, I hope that some Friend of the hon. and learned Gentleman, will kindly convey to him that of which he is doubtless not aware; that there is one trivial objection to his plan, namely this, that it is absolutely precluded by express stipulations of our treaty of reciprocity with the Brazils, which provides, that the

produce of Brazil shall be received in our ports upon the footing of that of the most favoured nation, and thus render it impossible without a direct breach of national faith, so far as Brazil is concerned, to draw a distinction in favour of the sugar of any other foreign country as compared with that of Brazil. Sir, if it were otherwise, if it were possible to draw such a distinction, I speaking for myself alone, and having no man's proxy, should be glad to entertain it, and thus give a practical proof of willingness to recognise the principles of fair competition; because I do admit, that competition is attended with certain beneficial results to the producer as well as to the consumer of commodities, and that monopoly is the parent, not only of hardship to the consumer, but of a sloth and dulness in trade, and hinders the development of its energies. I should also be desirous if it were practicable to see some such distinction attempted with this view, that we might thus explain fully to the world that we are now imposing very heavy duties on foreign sugar not merely because it is not of home growth, but because it is the produce of slave-labour and stimulates the slave-trade. Again, Sir, with respect to Brazil. The noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, conceiving, I imagine, that his proposition if displayed in its nakedness before the eyes of the British nation would be too ugly for them to endure, did employ certain soothing words about negotiation with Brazil, and about the exercise of the moral influence of this country for the mitigation of the existing evils, nay he went so far as to say for the ultimate abolition of the state of slavery. But what is the proposition of the noble Lord, and is it a mere vision and a dream of the imagination, or a scheme of one accustomed to practical affairs and knowing the nature of man? Here we are dealing with the Brazils, a state involved in all the responsibility of slavery and the slave-trade; and most unwilling as we know, like the people of Cuba, to abandon them: we again hold in our hands something in the nature of an inducement, namely, a privilege of regulated access to the British market; and the noble Lord actually advises us to give away this inducement at the outset, and then forsooth to enter on the negotiation. He will abandon the consideration to the holders of slaves, and then having so abandoned it, and having nothing left to offer, he will proceed to make his

bargain. It seems now to be proved by the confessions made on the other side, that any additional advantage to the revenue, to arise from the plan of the Government, over and above that advantage which will doubtless arise in the natural course of things from the increased supply of British sugar, and the reduction in price and increase of consumption consequent upon it, is altogether trifling: and in the same manner it is admitted, that the consumer has nothing worth mention to anticipate from the plan, and on this head, I can only hope, that the vain hopes which the speech of the noble Lord was calculated to raise, may at once be dispelled. It appears, therefore, that we are called upon to forego a policy friendly to humanity, without even a show of necessity. There is one other point in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to which I wish to allude. He alleged with some appearance of triumph, that when in 1829, Mr. Grant proposed to reduce the duty on West-India sugar to 20s., and that on foreign sugar to 28s., my right hon. Friend, the Member for Cambridge, declared himself friendly in principle to the proposal; and he seemed to think, that he has an advantage over my right hon. Friend in this circumstance. There is, however, one material distinction between that and the present case which he himself remembered: that was a question of competition not between free sugar and slave sugar, but between slave sugar and slave sugar. I admit that it was between slave sugar and slave-trade sugar. But there is another answer which I think the right hon. Gentleman himself will admit to be conclusive. Whatever may have been anticipated from such a reduction at the time, the subsequent events have shown, that in practice it would have been quite in operation, for a reason easily to be explained. The noble Lord stated the other night, that when slavery existed, the monopoly of sugar was complete: the noble Lord never was more mistaken, and he showed by that statement, that with whatever address he might have applied his mind to the present state of this question, he had not paid an equal attention to its earlier history. During the latter years of slavery, the British production of sugar outran the demand: in consequence a large surplus was exported to the markets of the Continent, and the price of that surplus naturally governed the price in the home market, with the exception of an advantage enjoyed by the British grower through the medium

of the drawback, on which I need not now dwell in detail, but it was estimated at 4s. or 5s. or thereabouts per cwt. This advantage through the drawback was practically the only protection then enjoyed by the British colonist; and, in point of fact, the prices of British sugar, during eight years, from 1828 to 1835, never once exceeded the prices of Brazil sugars by so much as 8s. I find from the *Gazette* averages, that in that series of years the excess in the price of British over Brazil brown and yellow sugar was as follows from year to year: 3s. 10d., 6s. 11d., 6s., 5s. 9d., 6s. 3d., 7s. 3d., 6s. 2d., 6s. So that in no one year was the actual protection worth 8s. per cwt., the sum which Mr. Grant proposed, and the change he proposed was accordingly altogether nugatory, even as it would be nugatory in practice if the present duty of 63s. were changed into 63½, either being generally equivalent to prohibition. Sir, having stated, that I would not follow the right hon. Gentleman into his general discussion of the principles of trade, I will be faithful to my promise; and I will forbear to inquire, with what degree of justice the claim is advanced on the other side to the credit of having been favourable in former times to commercial relaxations. But I did think that the noble Lord was unfair in some of the remarks which he made in his speech, his able and brilliant speech, of Friday last, with respect to the question who had heretofore been the friends of slavery, and who its opponents. Blotting out altogether the memory of the past, is it not enough for us to know that the slave-trade is a monster consuming every day we live, and that from year to year, according to the minute and careful calculations of Sir Thomas Buxton, a thousand human beings? While it may be said of war, pestilence, and famine, that each of them destroys its thousands, it is not less true of this abominable traffic, that it consumes its ten thousands. But I will not attempt to dilate upon its horrors. It is I know supposed impossible, that those who are connected with our colonies, or even those who sit on this side of the House, can entertain any sincere sentiment of those enormous evils. "The Gentlemen opposite," so said the noble Lord, "are claiming credit for what is but an affectation of humanity;" such were the terms that he did not scruple to apply. Well, Sir, I will lay humanity aside; but have I not a

right at least to feel and to plead for the decent consistency of my country? have I not a right to hope that it may escape being visited, from all the nations of the world, with that mingled ridicule and scorn which must follow the adoption of the proposal of the Government? Is it a fact upon record, or is it a dream, that this country paid twenty millions of compensation to the West Indian planters? Is it not true that in the maintenance of squadrons, in the support of settlements, in payments to foreign powers, and in various other charges, England has expended fifteen or twenty millions more in order to effect the abolition of the slave-trade? Is it not true that upon a very moderate computation, she has paid ten millions more in the shape of an enhanced price of colonial produce during the last seven years, mainly for the direct benefit of the emancipated labourer? And is it money alone that she has contributed? Has she not freely sacrificed the lives of many of the bravest of her sons, some of them in the settlements we have formed, many more who hover upon the seas to watch for the marauder? Are there not at this moment quitting your own shores, a devoted band, who are about to pierce through that broad cincture of poisoned air that girds the coast of Africa, in order to find an entrance for designs aiming at the extirpation of the slave-trade? With what decency can this sacrifice of life be continued? Well has Mr. Turnbull said, *cent per cent* is stronger than physical force: one physical force we apply for the suppression of the traffic, and we are invited, at the same time, to minister the strongest incentives to that lust of gain, by which we know that it is fed. The noble Lord the other night made allusions which, at the time, I did not well understand, to General Tarleton, but he did not then apprise us to what an extent he was indebted to that Gentleman. Yet the very arguments which General Tarleton used in and before 1806 in support of the slave-trade, the noble Lord has burnished and reproduced as his own. If the noble Lord says no, then I say he has reason to complain of General Tarleton in the words of the adage, *percant qui ante nos nostra dixerint*; for the General has been guilty of a sort of plagiarism by anticipation, and has purloined beforehand the arguments of the noble Lord. The words of the noble Lord were, that he did not think it would

be any gain to the negroes of the Brazil to be told that their sugar was not to get into the hands of English shop-keepers or artizans, that they might be flogged to death, but that their consolation must be that to Germany or Switzerland must go all the produce of their labour: just so said General Tarleton in 1806, 'the consequence of giving up this trade in any degree would be to throw it into the hands of the Americans, who could carry it on cheaper,' and, 'these Gentlemen are now for turning over the trade to the Americans, by whom the slaves would be treated with much more cruelty.' The parallelism of the argument, allowing for the necessary change of phrase, is exact. General Tarleton argued, 'as we cannot prevent others from partaking in the trade, let us partake in it ourselves': the noble Lord argues, 'as we cannot prevent others from encouraging the trade, let us encourage it ourselves.' However, the noble Lord urges that his party has always been the party favourable, and Gentlemen on this side of the House usually unfavourable to humanity. But what claim does the noble Lord mean hereupon to advance? Does he mean that if he proposes a measure, it is on that account alone to be considered as favourable to humanity, and that we must accept it without examining its merits in that respect, or whatever may be our own opinion of its bearings? In point of fact, Sir, this question has intrinsic merits which supersede the inquiry, by what persons it is brought forward. The country will not be content that it shall be judged otherwise than by those intrinsic merits. But is it not also true, that if in other times you have been the friends of the negro, your guilt is rather the more aggravated if you have abandoned your former course: and do you not expose even your previous conduct to taunts on the part of those who are inclined to suspect you, and to the charge, that if you use this as a question of party now, you were doing the same then, and neither now nor then were governed by the true principles applicable to the case, but by extrinsic and secondary considerations? And if the noble Lord forces us to examine this proposition with reference to the men by whom it is advanced, then I say there is to my mind a peculiar impropriety in the fact that these should be the persons to advance it who have laid claim to such credit for the past. Mr. Turnbull, in the dedica-

tion of his work on Cuba, to Lord Clarendon, calls him the illustrious author of the treaty of 1835 with Spain, and exhorts him to persevere, as the man peculiarly qualified to effect the abolition of the slave-trade; yet he is a Member of the Cabinet who has proposed the present plan. There is another name still more strangely associated with it. I can only speak from tradition of the struggle for the abolition of slavery; but, if I have not been misinformed, there was engaged in it a man who was the unseen ally of Mr. Wilberforce, and the pillar of his strength; a man of profound benevolence, of acute understanding, of indefatigable industry, and of that self-denying temper, which is content to work in secret, to forego the recompense of present fame, and to seek for its reward beyond the grave. The name of that man was Zachary Macaulay, and his son is a Member of the existing Cabinet. I know, Sir, that this occasion is viewed by many as one of great political excitement; and that great interest is taken with respect to the particular votes which are to determine the division. I do not share in such curiosity, but I am satisfied with the conviction, that the strength of the principles opposed to the present measure cannot fail to destroy it. The right hon. Gentleman must know, that it will be absolutely impossible for him to carry his resolution; and, for my own part, I am at a loss to know what rational motive could have induced the Government to mix with a general question of trade another question which the people of England are determined to entertain upon the basis of humanity; I can only ascribe it to that infatuation which is often found to accompany a laxity of principle. The noble Lord knows this House will not affirm his proposition. I know not how many of his adherents will follow him in the division; but I know that some who do it will do it with doubting minds and quailing hearts: the people will not admit that this matter is one to be decided by merely political or commercial considerations. The noble Lord, in his speech, described the poor man quitting the grocer's shop, unable to purchase sugar on account of the high price of last season. But that poor man did not sign a petition for such a measure as the present. During the pressure of last year, there was scarcely a petition from the people. This year there are no petitions in favour of your plan. The commercial classes mis-

trust your legislation, the people of England repudiate your boon, and I well know, that the vote of the British House of Commons at the close of this discussion will vindicate, in the eyes of Europe, and the world will amply vindicate, their country's fame.  
Debate again adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, May 11, 1841.

*Minority.] Bills.* Read a first time:—Criminal Justice; Turnpike Roads and Highways.—Read a second time:—Slaves Compensation; Arms (Ireland); Dublin Wide Streets.—Read a third time:—Entails Acts (Scotland) Amendment.

*Petitions presented.* By Lord Abinger, and Viscount Beresford, from Norton-st., Marylebone, and Piccadilly, for the Abolition of the Tolls on Waterloo Bridge.—By Lord Stratford, from Londonderry, for the Abolition of Church Patronage (Scotland).—By the Bishop of Winchester, from Clergymen in Yorkshire, for a more equitable Rating of Tithes.—By Viscount Melbourne, from Wandsworth, for the Abolition of Church Rates.

## USURY LAWS—RATE OF INTEREST.]

The Marquess of *Landowne* begged leave, pursuant to the notice which he had given, to move for the appointment of a committee to consider the amount of interest now payable by law on promissory notes. In making this motion he did not think it was necessary for him to offer any arguments in relation to any opinion which he might have formed on the Usury Laws as they hitherto existed, or as they might be amended. All that he should do at present, was to call the attention of the House to the law as it existed at present. By the 4th of William 4th, upon certain representations from the Bank of England, promissory notes under six months' date were taken out of the Usury Laws, and by the 1st of Victoria that exemption was extended to all bills under twelve months' date. That Act would expire towards the end of 1840, but in that year an Act was passed to continue the experiment until the year 1843. It was expedient, therefore, to come to some decision before the commencement of the next year. The object of the inquiry which he proposed, was confined to the expediency of giving a certain latitude to the money market, by permitting certain bills to be charged with more than the old legal rate of interest. The noble Marquess concluded by moving for "a Select Committee on the subject of the interest payable on promissory notes and bills of exchange."

Lord *Ashburton* said, that he had at present anything but a fixed opinion upon



this subject. He had received applications from various parties relative to the change which had been made in the Usury Laws. All the money brokers and money lenders thought it the greatest godsend which they could receive, whilst other parties viewed it quite in a different light. He confessed, that he should have preferred if his noble Friend could postpone the question for another year; for as yet they had not had any great experience of the change. He should say, that a committee in the year 1842 would do quite as well as a committee in the present year. He must also say, however, that he thought the notice of his noble Friend was rather too confined. He wished to see it extended to other securities, such as dock warrants, &c. He also wished to see it comprehend the question of the Usury Laws generally.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne*: he had no objection to the extension proposed by his noble Friend; he would, therefore, amend his motion so as to include the Usury Laws.

The motion, in its amended form, agreed to, committee nominated.

CORN-LAWS (IRELAND AND SCOTLAND).] The Earl of *Radnor* said, that on the previous night he had stated to their Lordships that Scotland had ceased to be an exporting, and was now an importing, country of corn. Since then he had looked at some returns on the subject, and he found his statement was correct, and that from the year 1829 up to 1839 Scotland had been an importing country at an annual average of 121,436 quarters. He had also stated, that the exportations from Ireland had been gradually decreasing; and he found, on reference to some returns on that subject, that since 1832 the quantity of wheat, wheat-meal, and flour exported had decreased every year.

The Earl of *Haddington* had not denied that grain was imported into Scotland. What he said was, that corn was imported into this country from Scotland, the corn received by the latter country from this being chiefly for the purpose of seed. There was also a large quantity of the finest flour for confectionery and the like exported (especially from Hertfordshire) to Scotland. But this bore no proportion to the whole consumption.

Lord *Monteagle* said, that the argu-

ment of his noble Friend (Earl *Radnor*) was complete, and showed from the Custom-house returns, which could not be impeached or disputed, that Scotland had lately become an importing country to a much greater extent than an exporting one. In four of the years referred to in the returns, Scotland imported more wheat than the rest of the United Kingdom.

The Earl of *Haddington* begged to ask if the noble Earl (*Radnor*) meant to say, that Scotland imported 121,000 quarters more than she exported?

The Earl of *Radnor* said, that was precisely what he meant. He believed the returns were correct in showing the excess of imported corn above the exported to be of that large amount, but he was not prepared to take his oath of it.

The Earl of *Glengall* said, that in examining the returns which had been laid on the Table, he found, that from the year 1820 up to 1838, or from the year 1828 up to 1838, there had been an immense progressive increase in the quantity of wheat exported from Ireland. Recent returns had shown, that the annual consumption of spirits in Ireland had decreased to the extent of 2,800,000 gallons. This might naturally lead noble Lords to suppose, that there must therefore be a diminished consumption of grain; but the effect of the change was to augment the consumption of coffee, and therefore of wheaten bread. Large baking establishments had been opened in various parts of Ireland, and thence the inference was obvious, that a greater quantity of Irish corn was now consumed at home than formerly was the case.

The Earl of *Radnor* was delighted to hear such a statement, but it certainly corroborated his conclusion that the exports of Ireland had decreased. Indeed it admitted the fact, and assigned a reason for it.

Lord *Ashburton* observed, that the returns made on the subject of corn, clearly showed that from 1820 to 1828, the quantity of corn produced in this country afforded a sufficient supply for the use of all its inhabitants, and as regarded the future, he did not hesitate to say, that the vast improvement which had of late years been effected in agriculture afforded the best grounds for believing that we should at all times be able to command that supply. On a former evening it had been stated, that the prices of corn at

Rotterdam did not fluctuate to the same extent as in London. Now, from the report of Mr. Jacob, it appeared that the prices of corn at Rotterdam varied from 104s. to 26s. What an outcry there would be in this country if the fluctuations in our prices made any approximation to this. In the year 1817 our price rose to 94s., but never since the enactment of the present corn laws had there been any such prices paid. On that and other grounds he was fully warranted in saying, that at no time and in no country had there been such steadiness in the prices of corn as in England during the last few years.

The Earl of *Wicklow* observed, that the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Radnor), had produced his own calculation in support of the views which he entertained, while his noble Friend (the Earl of Glengall) had supported his opinions by references to printed documents accessible to every noble Lord. He must say, that he thought it rather unfair thus to come down unexpectedly with statements and calculations which were difficult to be met, merely because they were unexpected. As he had risen to address their Lordships, he thought it only right to say, that in Ireland great improvements in agriculture had recently been effected, and therefore a great increase in the cultivation of wheat.

The Earl of *Radnor* defended himself from the charge of reading any returns which might not be exactly accurate. If they were not so, he could assure their Lordships it was unintentional on his part. He was surprised to have heard the opinions just expressed by the noble Lord opposite, when, in 1816, he had expressed sentiments exactly opposed to them. [The noble Lord read an extract from a speech of Mr. Baring, on the presentation of a petition from the merchants of London to the House of Commons, in which he expressed his strong approbation of the principles of free trade.]

Lord *Ashburton* said, that the opinions contained in the speech which the noble Lord had now read for about the hundredth time—were those of a young man who had been captivated by the delusive doctrines of free trade—particularly attractive to young minds. Those opinions the experience of twenty-five years had altered to a considerable extent, though he would still say, had not altogether removed.

The Duke of *Wellington*: it would be

very desirable, my Lords, when it is intended to bring forward subjects of this nature, that some notice should be given of that intention. If that were done, we on this side of the House would take care to have our documents in our pockets as well as noble Lords opposite, and then, I have no doubt, that we should be able to meet the calculations they bring forward. The noble Earl has read a paragraph of a speech of my noble Friend (Lord *Ashburton*) which he made some years ago. Now, my Lords, the sentiments of that speech are perfectly true in relation to the principles of political economy in general—and, I believe, have been acted upon by all Administrations in this country. But, my Lords, you must know, that the first man who brought forward those opinions (Adam Smith), which I have read, as well as noble Lords opposite, made an exception upon this very subject. He excepted corn from the doctrines he laid down as to all the other articles of trade. In relation to the subsistence of the people he says, that we must always take care to ensure that subsistence within the country itself—and accordingly he excepts corn from the several doctrines which he lays down. I confess that I have heard nothing during these discussions to alter my opinion, that the Corn-laws which were adopted almost unanimously in 1828 have perfectly answered the purposes for which they were intended, and have kept the prices as steady as the nature of the commodity will allow. Yes, my Lords, in this country, when we have produced corn for our own subsistence, and it is our object invariably to produce it, prices have been more steady than in any other country of Europe. It is my opinion, on all these grounds, that these laws have operated as successfully as any laws could have done.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, it would, perhaps, be necessary for both his noble Friend and himself to read Adam Smith again, in order to be sufficiently familiar with him—but his own impression was, that Adam Smith's doctrine was, that the laws relating to the protection of corn were great favourites with corn dealers—not that they were really advantageous either to the agriculturists or the public. He did not himself remember that Adam Smith had made any very pointed exception with respect to corn, from the opinions which he advocated with respect to free trade in general.

Lord Portman said, he would prefer the former opinions of his noble Friend (Lord Ashburton) to his present ones.

The conversation was dropped.  
Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, May 11, 1841.

**MOTION.]** Bills. Read a second time:—Lagan Navigation (Ireland).—Read a third time:—Exchequer Bills.  
**Petitions presented.** By Sir G. Grey, Mr. Pryme, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Hume, Mr. R. Gordon, and other hon. Members, from Devonport, Cambridge, Chorley, Leighton Buzzard, Kentish Town, Portsmouth, and many other places, for the Abolition of Church Rates.—By Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Wood, Mr. Clay, Mr. Aglionby, Mr. Hutt, Mr. Brotherton, Sir G. Strickland, and others, from Liverpool, Glasgow, Kandal, Cumberland, Westmoreland, Gateshead, and a great many other places, for the Alteration of the Import Duties.—By Mr. Cresswell, Mr. Lockhart, Mr. Crawford, Lord Stanley, Sir Robert Peel, and other hon. Members, from Liverpool, Glasgow, London Merchants connected with the West-India Colonies, and from many other places, against Alteration of the Import Duties.

**CHURCH RATES.]** Mr. Easthope said, he was quite aware of the inconvenience which must necessarily result to the House from any impediment being thrown in the way to delay the resumption of the important debate which stood adjourned from last night, and he was anxious not to be the means of offering any such interruption. But he was sure, that the House would feel, that after the great number of petitions which had been presented, praying for the abolition of church-rates, and, considering the very great excitement which prevailed throughout the country on that subject, it would be impossible for him to forego occupying some portion of the time of the House with the motion of which he had given notice, unless the House, in consideration of his forbearance, would allow him to bring in his bill without further remark at present, it being understood, that it should be fully discussed on the motion for the second reading. Unless the House would consent to this arrangement—reluctant as he was to occupy its time on an occasion like the present—it would be utterly impossible for him, consistently with his duty to his constituents, and to the petitioners on the question, to give way. In the hope, however, that no opposition would be thrown in the way of the arrangement which he had proposed with the view of consulting the convenience of the House, he should now briefly move for leave to bring in a bill to abo-

lish church-rates, and to make other provision for the repair of churches.

Mr. Hume seconded the motion.

Lord John Russell said, the bill which the hon. Member wished to introduce, proposed not only to abolish church-rates, but to make other provision for the repair of churches. If such was the object of the hon. Gentleman's bill, he (Lord John Russell), could see no objection to its being laid on the Table, under the arrangement the hon. Gentleman proposed; because he thought there could be no division of opinion as to the propriety of abolishing church-rates, were other means provided in lieu of them for the repairs of the church. He, for one, therefore, should not object to the first reading of the hon. Member's bill, reserving to himself the right of opposing it, either in part or whole, should he see occasion to do so, on the second reading.

Dr. Nicholl could not be brought to think, that upon a question of such vast importance as the present, the way proposed of dealing with it was a proper one for the House to adopt. He did not think the hon. Member entitled to bring forward a measure for changing the law of the land, after the unanimous decision of the Court of Exchequer upon a writ of error, without, at least, laying some ground for such a course. Nor did he think the House would act properly in allowing the hon. Member for Leicester to lay on the Table such a measure, without making a statement of the views he wished the House to adopt. At the same time, he thought it impossible that in the present state of the House, the subject could be fairly discussed; and, therefore, he should move as an amendment, that the Order of the Day for the adjourned debate on the motion for going into committee of ways and means, be now read.

Sir R. H. Inglis seconded the amendment, as he could not concur in the expediency, under any circumstances, of bringing in such a measure as that now proposed. On the present occasion, he was sure, that there were not six Members in the House, who expected, that any other subject than the adjourned debate upon the order of the day for going into committee of ways and means, would have taken place this evening.

Mr. Easthope said, that he would still adhere to his intention of consulting the convenience of the House, as far as possi-

ble, and would refrain, therefore, at the present moment, from noticing the remarks of the hon. Member for Cardiff upon the general merits of this question. At the same time, however, he could not help observing, that a very high authority in that House (Sir Robert Peel), when the question of church-rates was before the House six years ago (May 25, 1835), stated that :—

“So far as any question could be important to the maintenance of social harmony, to the promotion of satisfaction among the great body of dissenters, there was not a single question, excepting that of the Irish church, which so much pressed for an immediate practical settlement, as this of church-rates.”

He, as he said before, did not wish to take up the time of the House at a moment when there was so general an impatience to resume the adjourned debate. But would the House say, after the great mass of petitions which had been presented from all parts of the country on this important subject, that it would not give them the slightest attention? Were the people to be told, that having petitioned so generally on this subject, and a day being fixed for the consideration of their demands, the House, after all, would not so much as entertain the subject, or would, at most, pay just so much attention to the prayers of the people as was necessary to cast them aside altogether? This was indeed a very Irish way of entertaining the question. Having said so much, he should not trespass upon the attention of the House with further remarks, but as between the motion which he had made, and the amendment which had been moved by the hon. and learned Member for Cardiff, should at once throw himself upon the justice of the House.

Lord J. Russell said, that after the opening observations made by the hon. Member for Leicester, he, for one, was quite ready to allow the introduction of the hon. Members' bill this evening, reserving the discussion upon it till the second reading. As, however, this arrangement had been opposed by some hon. Members, he, considering the circumstances in which the House was placed, could not, if the question were pressed to a division, go so far as to vote in favour of the motion of the hon. Member for Leicester.

Mr. Hume said, that although he should have been prepared to vote in favour of his hon. Friend's motion, if pressed to a division, yet, after the declaration which had just been made by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonial Department, he did not think that there would be any use in so doing, and therefore he should, under the circumstances, recommend his hon. Friend not to press his motion at present, but rather to fix another early day when the subject might be brought forward without interruption.

Mr. Easthope said he hoped that the House would believe that he was very reluctant thus for one moment to engage its attention, contrary to the general sense of its Members; but he should be neglecting his duty to his constituents, and the numerous petitioners who had entrusted their cause into his hands, if he had consented to withdraw his motion without doing everything within his power to obtain a full and early discussion, at the earliest possible time that he could. As it was clear that he could not proceed further with any advantage, he would withdraw his motion for the present, giving, at the same time, notice that he should again bring the subject forward on this day fortnight.

Amendment and motion withdrawn.

SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS  
ADJOURNED DEBATE (THIRD DAY).]  
On the Order of the Day for the Adjourned Debate for the House going into Committees on Ways and Means being read,

Mr. Macaulay said: Unwilling as I am to stand in the way of my hon. Friend (Mr. Gisborne), who has the right in point of strict regularity to address the House, the House will feel that it would be difficult for me, after what has been said in this debate, not to take, if possible, the first opportunity of offering myself to your attention. It happened that I was not in my place last night. Had I been here, although at that hour, and in the state of the House, I should have had some difficulty in commanding attention, I should, notwithstanding, have trusted that for the very few minutes I felt it necessary to offer myself, I should have experienced that courtesy which in the midst of the most exciting political discussion an assembly of English gentlemen were ever ready to afford to any person whose personal feelings may be naturally excited. I am glad, however,

that it was otherwise. I am glad that until this morning I was unacquainted with some part of the debate which occurred last night. The consequence is, that I come here without, I trust, any feeling of irritation. I will not say, that the hon. Member for Newark, whom I will still call my hon. Friend, could have intended to be personally offensive to one from whom he never received any personal provocation. I am satisfied of the contrary; and the more so as some part of the expressions imputed to the hon. Gentleman were of a nature so gratifying to my feelings, that they more than compensated for the pain which was given by a censure which was not deserved. Avoiding, therefore, any irritating expression of my feelings, avoiding any recrimination or retort, I shall request the attention of the House for a very few minutes to an explanation of the part which I mean to take in the decision of the question before it. I do not intend to touch upon the general principles involved in this debate. I willingly leave them to rest on the luminous and eloquent exposition of my noble Friend (Lord J. Russell) to which I feel it would be difficult to add anything. The questions of detail I with equal pleasure leave to my right hon. Friends the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the President of the Board of Trade, and to other Gentlemen whose intimate knowledge of the commercial and manufacturing interests of the country enable them to speak with an authority and ability to which I cannot pretend. I only offer myself to a point on this question with regard to which it is impossible for me to continue silent. I shall endeavour to state, as soberly and as temperately as I can, those reasons which may lead a person who has, according to his situation and the measure of his ability, made exertions and sacrifices to remove from our laws the stain of slavery—a person who is sensible of the peculiar responsibility which lies on him for exertions and sacrifices, not his own, on this great question—honestly and properly to support the measure of her Majesty's Government. My hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone), if I rightly understand him, imputes to me, and to those who take the same view of this motion, some dereliction of principle. Nay, he speaks of our laxity of principle, and a certain infatuation amounting to a judicial blindness, which marked the conduct of those entertaining the same opinions as I do with regard to slavery, in giving their adhesion to the views of the Government. What is this principle which

we have lost sight of? I am utterly at a loss to discover any that we have violated. I have listened to speeches in this House: I have read the newspapers: I have looked at the resolution of the noble Lord (Lord Sandon) for the purpose of lighting upon the great principle of humanity and justice which we have been accused of violating; and I have examined all these sources in vain. As to the resolution which has been laid before the House, I do not complain of it. I do not say, that it is not a justifiable mode of political warfare; but with any statement of a moral principle, it is clearly not chargeable. It, on the contrary, appears to me to be a skilfully contrived party motion, the object of which is to perplex and dispossess the advisers of the Crown, without committing their successors. I see nothing in that motion which, if it be carried, can impede the success of that principle of free trade which I devoutly hope may be ultimately sanctioned, or which can prevent those now opposed to such large and enlightened views coming down on some future occasion to the House with exactly the same proposition as that submitted by her Majesty's Government. I have read, as I have said, controversial writings—I have looked into debates, and still I try in vain to find out the great moral principle which we are accused of violating. Is it intended to set up as a law of morality that we ought not to take slave-grown produce? Clearly not. That we may use the slave-grown cotton of the United States, and slave-grown coffee and tobacco, is not contested. And with regard to sugar itself, that which is the product not only of slaves, but of the slave trade, is not found to be interdicted in large portions of the British empire. We do not deny its use to the Canadians or to the people of the Cape of Good Hope—nay, we do not deny it to the inhabitants of these very West-Indian islands. What, then, is this moral principle—this great general law of humanity and justice, which permits a man to wear slave-grown cotton on his feet, and not taste slave-grown sugar in his tea—which permits him to smoke slave-grown tobacco, and denies him a palatable beverage to drink with it—rather, which permits him the enjoyment of a cup of slave-grown coffee, but does not allow him to sweeten it with slave-grown sugar. Nay, to make the absurdity more complete, which permits slave-grown sugar to be imported into Newfoundland and Barbadoes, and declares it shall not be admitted into Yorkshire and

Lancashire. I can perfectly understand, that hon. Gentlemen opposite may have reasons of good weight why they should tolerate one, and not the other; but I altogether deny they can rest the distinction on any great general law of morality. And I must say, when I contemplate the whole case got up on the opposite side, it seems to me that the distinction which has been drawn partakes very much less of moral feeling than of party interests. As to my conduct, and that of those who think with me, I shall perhaps best defend it by stating the considerations which weighed with my own mind in taking the course on which I have decided. Suppose any philanthropist were persuaded himself of the justness of the step, and called on us to exclude the cotton of the United States: suppose he were to draw—and I fear he might draw with great truth—a very melancholy picture of the moral, social, and physical evils connected with the system of slavery in the southern parts of the United States. Suppose he were to ask whether we could consent to receive three or four million pounds of cotton annually, every ounce of which was the produce of slave labour, and then call on the House to pass a law interdicting by a direct prohibition, or by a duty so high as to amount to a direct prohibition (which is the case of the foreign sugar), the importation of cotton from such a quarter—the right hon. Member for Tamworth, the hon. Member for Newark, and the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, would, with one voice, pronounce such a proposition inadmissible. The reasons they would give for coming to such a determination, I am sensible I could give but very imperfectly; but I think I can state the views which, in such a case, would influence my own vote, and then I shall leave it to the consideration of the House to say whether these reasons do not to a great extent apply to the present case. I should say, if such a proposition were brought on, “I admit that slavery is a great and fearful evil; I admit that in all parts of the world which are within the sphere of our power we lie under a moral obligation to abolish it. I admit that no cost, however great, should stand in the way of what is so clear a duty as it ought in that case to be considered; but the case of slavery within the control of our own power, and that of slavery in a foreign country, present such distinct features that they ought to be treated on perfectly different principles.” We have not the sovereign power of the united legislature of the

States. We cannot say to the slave owners of Georgia, as we did to those of Antigua, “here is money to reimburse your loss; set your slaves at liberty, admit them to the enjoyment of freedom and to the exercise of equal rights with yourselves.” We can exercise no such direct control; we can only influence such parties by some indirect means. Some of these it is clearly our duty to use. Whatever the persuasion, the discussion, the moral power, the arguments, and the practice which one great nation can effect with another, we are bound to resort to. I regard with the highest approbation those efforts which have been made for the purpose of putting down the slave-trade, through means of English cruisers, and of making treaties with foreign nations with the object of putting down that trade; but if we are called on to prohibit all commercial intercourse between countries employing slave-labour and our own, if we are called on to prohibit the free admission of their produce into our ports, the question presents itself in a very different aspect. I am here charged, in the first place, with providing for the happiness of our own people. It is committed in a very different form from that by which the people of other countries are recommended to my care. All men have certain claims on my sympathy, but all have not equal claims. I maintain if the State neglects that which is its proper and legitimate duty, a risk is run that both the functions which legitimately belong to it, and those which it unnecessarily usurps, will be ill performed. I see in this country a great manufacturing population, drawing the materials of manufacture from a limited market. I see a great cotton trade carried on, which furnishes nearly two millions of people with food, clothes, and firing, and I say, that if you shut out slave-grown cotton, you would produce a mass of misery amongst the people whom Providence has committed to your charge frightful to contemplate; you would introduce desolation into your richly flourishing manufacturing districts; you would reduce hundreds on hundreds to beggary and destitution; you would risk the stability of your institutions—and when you had done all this, you would have great reason to doubt whether you conferred any great benefits on the particular class for whom you made such sacrifices. You would merely transfer the present trade which you carry on to your rivals. You would make Germany a

Warwickshire, Leipsic another Manchester, and without elevating one slave in the United States to the position of a freeman, you would bring hundreds of thousands of your own industrious artisans to beggary. If any person were to come forward with such a proposition, for the exclusion of slave-grown cotton, I think I should be justified in opposing it on the grounds I have stated; and it appears to me, that this motion should be judged of, though not quite to the same extent, on the same principle. The question must be looked at as one of expediency. To the best of my power I have fairly weighed the effect likely to be produced to the people of England, by depriving them of the market of Brasils, which I firmly believe will be, to a great extent, if not altogether, shut out by the continuance of your present commercial law. I have endeavoured to consider what effects will be produced in extinguishing the Brazilian slave-trade by the influence which Great Britain would necessarily acquire, if she opened her markets to the Brasilians. I have attempted to compare the degree of unhappiness, which could possibly be removed from the Brasilians, by retaining a commercial system of restriction, with the degree of unhappiness inflicted on a people more immediately placed under our charge, by a perseverance in such a course of policy. After making this comparison it is my deliberate opinion that it is our duty to adopt a proposition similar to that of her Majesty's Government. I really cannot conceive how any hon. Gentleman who is content to receive slave-grown cotton can pronounce a departure from principle to have taken place in the conduct of others, because calculations as to the effects of a change in our present system by one party differ from the views of the other. Nor can I see any inconsistency in giving twenty millions for the abolition of a great moral and social evil which we were guilty of inflicting, which was under our control, and which oppressed our fellow-subjects, the negroes of the Indies; and saying we will not pay what I verily believe will be a great deal more than twenty millions, for the purpose of averting what I admit to be a horrible evil, but for which we are not responsible, over which we have no direct control, which we cannot abolish, and which I very much doubt whether we should, by taking such a course, at all diminish. It has been said, that foreign nations will look with aston-

ishment at the inconsistency displayed by parties on this question. I do believe that foreigners will be surprised when they look into this question, and see the different conduct pursued by those when a great monopoly was connected with the continuance of slavery in our dominions, and the scruples now raised concerning it, when carried on in a foreign country. And if foreigners carry their curiosity far enough, and, looking into the public lives of those who have come forward on this occasion, compare the present division with those that took place formerly, and particularly in 1823, they may perhaps find some reason to be astonished that precisely the same persons who struggled the most vehemently to uphold the great evil for which we were directly responsible, and which it was our first duty to remove, were those who maintained that no sacrifices were too great for the extinction of an evil which we did not produce, and which we were in no way directly bound to remedy. My object has been only to show, that there is no necessary inconsistency in wishing to extirpate slavery within the British Empire, and, at the same time, supporting the proposition which has been laid on the Table of the House. As to the general question, I shall only say, that a great financial and commercial crisis appears to me to have arrived at the same time. For the support of the public faith, and for the safety and dignity of the State, the wants of the revenue must be supplied. For the security of our manufactures, and to protect them against rivalry, our great towns have cried out for the removal of commercial restrictions. It so happens that her Majesty's Government have the power by one measure to prop the revenue, and to extend our commerce; to make good the deficit in our supplies, not by making the people poor, but, as I conscientiously believe, by making them rich. I utterly deny, and I can speak with confidence of my own feelings and opinions, that these measures have been thrown on the Table of the House in a fit of random despair. I deny that I despaired of seeing the greater part of them carried. We have miscalculated—that is unquestionable. We well knew, in the present state of parties, that the strength of the Government alone was utterly incapable of carrying them. But, even after the evening on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his statement, and down even to the moment when the noble Member for Liverpool laid

his motion on the Table, I had hopes that there were persons on the other side, who from a patriotic feeling, from a just consideration of the necessities of the State, would as, to do them justice, they had done on many other occasions—have come forward, and without relaxing their general opposition to the Government, have assisted that Government in meeting the difficulties which pressed on the country. Their support would undoubtedly have enabled the Government to carry the material parts of the Budget, including that now under debate. These calculations have turned out to be unfounded. But the seed we have sown is not lost. I feel a firm conviction that at no distant period these great reforms we have proposed in our commercial system will become the law of the land. I don't expect, when that time comes we shall occupy these benches, but whenever it arrives, I shall not deny my adhesion to the principles of that great party to which I am unalterably attached. It is not the first time in the history of that party, that they yielded the harvest to those who did not bear the burden and heat of the day. It is not the first time they have been eager supporters of a measure which they believed likely to promote the public good, whatever were the motives, or however tardy the admission in its favour of the party which brought it forward.

Sir George Clerk said, that reluctant as he felt at all times to trespass on the indulgence of the House, he felt, that he was under peculiar disadvantage in having to follow the right hon. Gentleman, to whose eloquence the House must always listen with pleasure. His only consolation, however, in doing so, was the strength of the cause which he advocated—a strength, of which no greater proof could be given than by the weakness of the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman against it, and in support of his own consistency. The right hon. Gentleman had only repeated arguments, every one, of which had been used by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, on the introduction of the measure, and which had been so completely answered by the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets. The whole scope and end of those arguments went to prove that the Opposition were inconsistent in their conduct, because they consented to receive slave-grown produce, and at the same time opposed the proposition of the noble Lord, on the ground that it encouraged slavery,

and stimulated the Slave-trade. But what was the actual state of the case? Were they to be told by the right hon. Gentleman that because they could not carry out to the fullest extent a measure just and good in itself that they should abandon it altogether, without endeavouring to obtain a portion of it, or that, because they could not get a sufficient supply of cotton, the product of free labour, they were not alone to stop the manufacturing industry of the country, but also to give encouragement to the products of slavery in another form? Were they, in short, to be told, that, because they could not get any but slave-grown cotton, that they were also to take slave-grown sugar from foreign nations, although they had a full knowledge of the fact that the free labour of our own colonies produced more than sufficient of that article for the consumption of the country? He was greatly astonished to find any one of the right hon. Gentleman's name arguing that the efforts of this country for the suppression of slavery should be confined to our own dominions, and that they should not be likewise directed to the benefit of slaves in other countries; and that any attempt to extinguish slavery in foreign states, should be characterized by him as quixotic and absurd. He would ask the hon. Gentleman, if such were his opinion, why not, as a Member of her Majesty's Government, at once put a stop to the waste of human life on the African coast, at our respective stations established there for suppression of the Slave-trade? That would be only consistent with the right hon. Gentleman's course of argument, for there was no further need of them as far as our own colonies were concerned. Did the right hon. Gentleman mean to infer that, because domestic slavery could not be put down in the United States of America, nothing should be done towards its prevention in Cuba and the Brazils? The right hon. Gentleman had referred to former debates in that House for the purpose of charging hon. Gentlemen on his (Sir G. Clerk's) side of the House, with inconsistency in their present opposition to the plan of the Government, and the right hon. Gentleman had more than insinuated that that opposition was the result of a new-born zeal on the subject of slavery. But he (Sir G. Clerk) denied the truth of the charge and the propriety of the insinuation; and he maintained that those hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House, who had been in Parliament since Mr. Can-



ning's resolutions of 1823, had uniformly supported every proposition having for its effect the practical abolition of slavery. But how did the case stand with regard to the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues? The hon. Member for Wigan, brought forward a motion in the course of the last Session of Parliament, for the admission of foreign sugar to the English market, on the same terms as those now proposed; and the hon. Member in bringing it forward stated, that though he had endeavoured to distinguish between slave-grown sugar and free-grown sugar, he found it impossible, and therefore left the distinction untouched. The hon. Gentleman was, however, opposed by her Majesty's Government—not on the ground of protection to the colonies, not even on the ground of finance; for it was admitted that the revenue would be, in all probability, bettered by it, but on the ground that to adopt it would be to give a direct encouragement to slavery. On that ground, and on that ground alone, it was opposed by the right hon. the President of the Board of Trade, by the hon. and learned Member for the city of Dublin, by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, and by other hon. Members; and in the list of the division that took place on that occasion was to be found no less a name than that of the right hon. the Secretary at War. If the right hon. Gentleman then entertained the opinion that putting down slavery in the British colonies was quite sufficient for this country, and that it was quixotic to attempt to put it down in Cuba and in the Brazils, why did he not vote for the motion of the hon. Member for Wigan on the same principles as he now advocated? Why did he vote against it? Before, then, the right hon. Gentleman charged inconsistency against his (Sir G. Clerk's) side of the House, he should have looked to his own side; for there he would have found a more recent instance of inconsistency with regard to this very question, in the course pursued last Session by the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues. The right hon. Gentleman's speech had, however, one great merit—it was confined to the question before the House, the reduction of the sugar duties. Knowing the weakness of the case of the now hon. Gentlemen opposite, he was not surprised at their anxious efforts to withdraw from the subject in debate as much as possible, and to cover their retreat by the introduction of abstract topics, and vague general declama-

tion on principles wholly irrelevant to the issue. Nothing could show more clearly that the arguments of the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets and other hon. Gentlemen were unanswerable, and that the statements made respecting the supply of colonial sugar could not be met by the Government. Everything showed that that supply had increased, was increasing, and would increase; that at present it was quite sufficient, that it would soon meet the demands of an increased consumption, and ultimately so much increase as to make the country once more a sugar-exporting country, as it had been previous to the emancipation of the negroes in the West-India colonies; and when therefore, the price of sugar in this country, would be regulated by the price in the continental markets. The great object of hon. Gentlemen on the other side seemed to be, however, not to consider the subject in connection with those facts, but to lay down certain abstract principles, and then to cry out that those who opposed the Government proposition respecting the sugar duties were the opponents of free trade. No hon. Member on his side of the House, he believed, denied abstractedly the advantages of free trade to a community, but it by no means followed that abstract propositions were always practicable, for in the present case they were clearly not so. No one denied the truth of the general principle that it was advantageous, to purchase any article we required in the market, where we could procure it at the lowest price. But as in Mechanics and Dynamics a formula might be laid down and its truth demonstrated, yet when it came to be taken by actual experiment, the results would be very different, because it was necessary to make allowance for motion, resistance of the air, or other disturbing causes; so in political economy, there were disturbing causes which prevented them from carrying into full effect abstract principles which no person was disposed to contest. In this country, especially, these disturbing forces had great power, from the highly artificial condition of society which existed. We had a national debt, the interest and charges on which exceeded all the other expenses of the country; the consequence of which was, that competition with nations without any such burden, in the cheapness of production from human labour, was out of the question. If it could be imagined that foreign countries would always maintain pacific and friendly

relations with this country, they might, no doubt, withdraw many protections which were now necessary—not for the protection of individual or class interests merely, but of the great interests of the nation at large. One class of articles that came under that category was corn. It was of the highest importance that as to one of the first necessities of life this country should, as far as possible, be independent of foreign supply. Hon. Gentlemen might say it was as absurd to establish any protection as between the inhabitants of one country and the inhabitants of other countries, as it would be to interfere with the competition between the different classes of tradesmen in the same town or between those in the same town who followed the same trade; that it was as absurd to raise the price of corn by affording a moderate protection to our own agricultural interest, as it would be for the blacksmith to refuse the assistance of the carpenter in the manufacture of various articles of furniture; but it was to be recollected that foreign countries might from national jealousy and other causes not always take the same benevolent and philanthropic views which alone entered into the contemplation of hon. Members opposite. Why did this country maintain its navigation laws? Because it had been considered necessary to encourage so great a commercial marine as would be sufficient to supply a navy able to maintain the honour and dignity of this country; but if it were certain that no disputes would ever take place with foreign powers—if it were certain that our colonial possessions and our mercantile marine were exposed to no risk of hostile aggression—then he agreed that the arguments would be strong for the repeal of all our navigation laws; because it might be shown that we could obtain foreign seamen for lower wages than British seamen, and under those circumstances it would be absurd to employ the seamen at the higher wages. That would be true if under no circumstances could they be obliged to fall back upon their commercial marine for the safety of the country. He remembered, that in the finance committee of 1828, Sir George Cockburne had said, in answer to a question by the hon. Member for Kilkenny, as to what was the proper naval force in the time of peace, that it was impossible for him to state any precise number of ships and men; but that if they could show him that the commercial marine of the country was at no time, and under no circumstances, likely to be exposed to hostile aggression,

then he should say, that they would require no ships of war; but it was because the great interests of the country were always exposed and liable to such dangers, that it was necessary to surround them with these protections. He admitted, that the amount of protection and the mode in which it was to be afforded, always presented fair matter of discussion; and further, he thought that it was incumbent on those who claimed such protection, to prove to the satisfaction of the House and the country, that the amount which they asked for was not beyond what the circumstances of the case and the peculiar nature of the trade or interest absolutely required. He would apply that principle to the question now before the House, the sugar duties. It was a fact admitted on all hands, that such was the fertility of Cuba, and such the quality of Cuba sugar, it was possible to obtain from that island sugar to an unlimited extent of superior quality and lower price than from our own colonies. Of course, therefore, on the principle of political economy, that you should buy an article wherever you can get it cheapest and best, the question was at end; but there entered into this question considerations of a much higher nature than those more sordid considerations upon which the hon. Gentlemen opposite dwelt so much; and the people of this country, however much they might feel the pressure of high prices, and however much they might be exposed to privation, would cheerfully consent to pay those high prices, and to suffer that privation, rather than obtain better sugar at a lower price, by abandoning measures in the success of which they had evinced the greatest interest, and for which they had already made tremendous sacrifices. Had any answer been given to the statements of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, as to the supply which might reasonably be expected from our own possessions next year? He was surprised, that after those statements, no Member of her Majesty's Government had risen and offered to the House any explanation with regard to them. Last night, indeed, after three days' consideration, the President of the Board of Trade had, he would not say attempted, to answer those statements, but had expressed some reasons why he doubted their accuracy, and the reason which the right hon. Gentleman gave was, that he had received estimates from different quarters, and they did not entirely correspond. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets

had told them that there would be, in all probability, a supply from our own possessions of 240,000 tons during the course of next year, and some gentlemen connected with the sugar trade in Liverpool had stated a larger amount, but the only difference was between 240,000 and 260,000 tons; and if the right hon. Gentleman chose to adopt the smaller amount and even to make a large deduction from it, still there would be a greater supply than the consumption when the prices were at the lowest required. What, then, must be the effect of the introduction of any quantity beyond that which might fairly be considered the maximum of consumption? What was to become of the surplus of 40,000 or 60,000 tons? That surplus must be exported to foreign countries; and the necessary consequence was, that the prices must be reduced to the level of the European markets. Such a result was indeed most desirable, but it would involve a great dereliction of principle, if, under such circumstances, we admitted into our markets Brazilian sugar; because then what became of the arguments founded on the necessity of conciliating the Brazilian government, and inducing them to take our manufactures by taking their sugar? As long as they wanted our hardware they would purchase it from this country, whether we took their sugar for consumption, or continued to be the carriers of sugar for other nations. He supposed hon. Gentlemen opposite thought they were guilty of great inconsistency if they became the medium of transmitting Brazilian sugar from the coast of Brazil to foreign countries. No doubt any principle carried to an extreme point would lead to inconsistencies; and suppose they desisted to be carriers, if the Brazilians had no other means of paying for commodities, except in sugar, it could be of no consequence whether we were the carriers, or whether the sugar was carried in French ships. But, suppose they acted on that principle, and ceased to be carriers, what would be the consequence of carrying out that principle to its full extent? Not only must they refuse to have any intercourse with any nation where slavery existed—but they must also refuse to have any commercial intercourse with any nation which had not the same scruples on that subject with themselves—but because they could not carry out that principle to its full extent, especially as to articles which they could only obtain from coun-

tries where slavery did exist, were they justified in doing less than they were able, and adopting measures which had a direct tendency to encourage slavery? The sugar growers of the Brazils had the European markets whether we carried their sugar or not—and therefore we did not increase the trade by being the medium of transmission; but if we admitted it into this country, and by its admission displaced our own colonial sugar, we opened a new market for the slave-grown sugar, which it was completely in our power to close against them—and we were guilty of a dereliction of principle by great additional encouragement to the slave-trade, especially at the present moment, when there was a prospect of a large supply from the East and West Indies. This proposition was a peculiarly unnecessary and gratuitous encouragement of slavery. When the great experiment of emancipation was complete, and the state of the labourers in the West Indies was better understood, he had no doubt that those colonies would, as formerly, send a supply averaging about 25 per cent. more than sufficient for home consumption. No advantage to the revenue could be expected from this proposition, because whatever amount of duty was derived from the admission of foreign sugar, could only be obtained by the exclusion of an equal amount of sugar the growth of the British possessions. But the right hon. Gentleman anticipated an increase in the revenue of 600,000*l.* from that source. Now, what quantity of sugar at the differential duty of 12*s.* must be admitted to raise that sum? About 50,000 tons, a quantity equal to a quarter of the whole consumption. Could it, then, be contended, that the opening of so large a market would not offer the greatest possible stimulus to the slave-trade? It was calculated to increase the miseries of those who were already slaves, and to cause the importation of an unlimited number of unfortunate Africans. The only other view in which this question could be regarded was its effect upon the consumer. The noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies had taken the present price of foreign sugar, and, adding to that the duty of 36*s.*, or 37*s.* 6*d.*, had stated a result of 59*s.* 6*d.* as the average price of foreign sugar; and also, taking the present price of colonial sugar, and adding the duty of 25*s.*, the noble Lord had made the average price of colonial sugar about 61*s.*; that was a difference of 1*s.* 6*d.* in favour of the consumer. But that statement was made

on Friday last; and already, owing to the increased supply, the *gazette* price of colonial sugar had so fallen as to leave no difference between that and the price of foreign sugar, according to the calculation of the noble Lord. But what effect could the difference which the noble Lord had supposed, have for the poor consumer, who could only purchase 1lb. or 1½lb. of sugar out of his week's earnings? He was not surprised to find, that a petition had been presented from the wholesale and retail grocers of London, in favour of this scheme; because it was clear, that if the price of sugar were to fall 1s. 6d., the whole of that sum would go into the pockets of that class of persons, and no advantages could, by possibility, be derived by those who were obliged to buy very small quantities at a time. When taxes upon articles were reduced even to such an extent as to produce a large amount of revenue, it was well known, that the poor consumer derived no good from that reduction, he found no difference in the price of the article; for the whole of that difference was distributed among, and absorbed by the various parties through whose hands the article passed in the course of trade, before it descended to the poor consumer. There could be little doubt, that they were indebted for this proposition of her Majesty's Government, to the Import Duties Committee of last year, to which he thought an undue degree of importance had been attached. He regretted, that other engagements had prevented his attendance upon that committee; but he had read the evidence and report attentively, and he admitted, that it contained important statements made by gentlemen whose opinions were entitled to respect—such as the late Secretary to the Board of Trade, the present Secretary, and Mr. Porter, also a gentleman connected with that board; but he did not, on this occasion, attach so much weight as generally he should be disposed to do to these statements; and he was supported in that by the President of the Board of Trade, who had stated the other night, that those statements contained great exaggerations, and that the calculations were erroneous. Still that report had gone out to the country with the weight of those names, and without any contradiction, for six months. He was not, therefore, surprised, that those opinions had been supposed to come with the authority of the President of the Board of Trade and her Majesty's Government; and in consequence of that, many persons

had been induced to sign petitions without due consideration. There was the petition which had been presented on the night of the Budget, from the merchants and traders of the city of London, and which the right hon. Gentleman had considered of so much importance, that he read it again last night. What had occurred in the interval? A petition had been presented from many of the leading merchants of London, saying, that when they signed the former petition, they were not aware of the objects and intentions of the Government. They knew very well how petitions were got up, and the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, needed not to have read so repeatedly that petition which seemed to have been the strongest argument he had in his blue box. But what was the recommendation of the evidence before the Sugar Committee? It was, that a reduction of 1s. 6d. would do no good whatever to the consumer, and that it was necessary to make such a reduction, as, that, upon a pound of sugar something valuable to the poor man could be taken off. Unless 9s. 4d. on the cwt., which would give a reduction of 1d. in the pound, were proposed, he could not understand how the poor could be benefited. Such a reduction would increase the consumption, and be a great boon to the consumer. This was no new doctrine of his. He had voted in 1831, in a minority, for the reduction of the duty on sugar; but the argument of the President of the Board of Trade against such a reduction then, was, that the state of the revenue would not permit it. It was opposed by Lord Althorp and by Mr. P. Thomson then on the ground of there not being a surplus of revenue of more than 300,000*l.* How, then, could a reduction be asked at present, when there was a deficiency of 1,800,000*l.* The hon. Member for Kilkenny might be consistent in voting for a reduction in the revenue, for it was only from a falling off in it, that he could hope to force the Government to that economy which he advocated. But was that the policy of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? The budget of 1840 was on a different principle from the present. It was then said, that taxation could bear an increase of 5 per cent., and that the customs and excise revenue would improve by that increase. But did hon. Gentlemen on his (Sir G. Clerk's) side of the House on that occasion deny the principle that excess of taxation would be

injurious to the revenue? Some hon. Gentlemen had argued, that nothing was to be done but to take off taxation, and, that such was the elasticity of the country, that the revenue would increase. The same thing was said of the Post-office, and when there was a deficiency of 1,200,000*l.*, those hon. Gentlemen had the power to force the Chancellor of the Exchequer to reduce the postage. He would not, then, speak of the benefits of such a measure, but, he would ask, what were its results? Before the reduction of taxation, the net produce was 1,600,000*l.* What was it during the four quarters of the last year? For the quarter ending July 5, 1840, the net produce was 100,000*l.*; for the quarter ending October 10, 1840, it rose to 123,000*l.*, and this on account of some large payments made to the Post-office of sums previously due for postage from the public departments. But did that increase continue. For the quarter ending January last, the net produce was 98,000*l.*; and for the quarter ending April 5, 93,000*l.*, being a still further fall. From these figures he could see no reason to expect any increase beyond a sum of between 90,000*l.* and 100,000*l.* per quarter. The Secretary for the Colonies, in talking of the state in which the finances of this country were placed, had said, that it could not be made a charge against the Government, for that Gentlemen on the opposition side of the House had, on all occasions, voted in favour of the measures recommended by the Government and were, consequently, equally culpable as the Government. He denied the argument, and he denied the fact. One cause of the embarrassment was the Post-office reduction, which was the cause of a loss equal to one half of the large deficiency now complained of. The Government had received from his side of the House nothing but remonstrances against that experiment in the face of the financial difficulties in which they were then placed. To the state of our relations with China, another large part of our deficiency was attributable. Were hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House responsible for that? Had they justified the conduct which the Government had pursued for many years in relation to China? Or had they not last year left on the journals of the House the expression of their opinion of the want of foresight and capacity displayed by the Government in their conduct of the relations with that country? The expense of put-

ting the country into a proper state of defence he had certainly upheld; and when the peril in which the country was placed last year was considered, he felt that expense would be fully justified in the eyes of the country. Her Majesty's Ministers seemed to be very indignant at its being supposed that the Government had changed its mind on the present question rather suddenly, in consequence of their recent defeats. It was not necessary to prove that such a change had taken place in their views within the last few days, but he could not imagine how any Member of the Government could avoid seeing on the very first day of the Session that the Irish Registration Bill could not be carried; and when he recollected on how many occasions the Government had purchased for a short time the support of hon. Gentlemen by similar changes, he felt at a loss to account for the indignation of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. He had the strongest objection to the proposition made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; firstly, because it would undoubtedly hold out the strongest stimulus to slavery and to the slave-trade; secondly, because looking to the large supply now to be expected from our own colonies, it was a measure totally uncalled for; thirdly, because it would ultimately fail as a mere finance arrangement; and, fourthly, that for so paltry a reduction no practical benefit could possibly be derived from it by the poor man. Upon these grounds he should most cordially support the amendment proposed by his noble Friend, and give his most decided opposition to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. Ward observed that the hon. Baronet who had just sat down had commenced his speech by reproaching those who had spoken on the Ministerial side of the House for endeavouring to draw attention from the subject legitimately under the consideration of the House, and to divert it to wider and more extended topics. The right hon. Baronet had himself fallen into the very error for which he blamed his adversaries; for instead of confining himself to the question of the Sugar Duties, he had, in the course of his not very brief speech, entered into a dissertation upon the principles of free trade, of which he professed himself in the abstract an ardent admirer, although he made such large deductions subsequently for what he termed friction and disturbing

causes, that he feared his free-trade principles had little chance of ever being carried practically out. He then had talked of the Post-office, the Import Duties Committee, the Admiralty, the Irish Church, and the Ballot; in short, between the beginning and the end of his speech, the right hon. Baronet had refreshed his hearers by a reference to every one of the topics that had been under the notice of the House for the last ten years. The only thing the right hon. Baronet forgot to state was, that whilst 800,000*l.* a year had been lost to the revenue in consequence of a most beneficial change in the Post-office, an equal sum had also been lost in perpetuity in consequence of the compensation given to the West India proprietors for the emancipation of their slaves. This last point, which was carefully omitted by the right hon. Baronet, would have had some reference to the subject now under discussion; a remark that could not be applied to any of the other topics so industriously introduced. But to come more immediately to the question. The object of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, in making sugar the subject of his resolution, was perfectly clear. It was the flag under which the protected interests could most decently fight. It enabled them, as the hon. Member for Stamford had justly said to invoke higher and holier sympathies than could be appealed to in the case of timber or corn. The hon. Member for Lincoln had announced, that there was a complete coalition between them, that they were to stand or fall upon the same ground; and the best proof that the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, had chosen his ground skilfully was, the ease with which a man of such acute mind as his right hon. Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, had been induced, by a mistaken feeling of consistency, to fall into the trap. He admitted the high principle that induced his right hon. Friend to sacrifice to the one object put forward in the resolution, his personal predilections, and all the other objects of his long political life; but in this important step, he could not admit his sense. He had always heard that humanity was the most dangerous of passions, when not kept within reasonable bounds. Philanthropy had its fanaticism as well as religion, and both seemed equally exempt from ordinary rules. For what was the Government

proposition, and how had his right hon. Friend dealt with it? Was it proposed to admit the slave-grown sugar of Cuba and Brazil into the English market on equal terms, and thus to swamp the importation of the sugar of our own colonies, the produce of free labour? That was not the fact. The Government proposition was not to allow the free importation of foreign sugar, but to place a protective duty of 50 per cent. upon the free labour sugar of our own colonies—a larger protection than his hon. Friend the Member for Lincolnshire, who had spoken on the first night of the debate (Mr. Handley), representing, as he did, the concentrated exigencies of his 9,000 Corn-law mad constituents, had ventured to ask for English land. A check upon the rise of price in sugar, which monopoly always encourages by competition whenever the price exceeded a given point, was all which the Government meant, and of this he entirely approved; for he was not prepared to go the length of his hon. Friend the Member for London (Mr. Grote,) and of some other Gentlemen on his side of the House, and to say that he would at once do away with all restriction upon the importation of slave-labour sugar. He admitted the value of the West Indies as a market, and their claim upon the national consistency and good faith, and was most anxious to see the great experiment that had been begun in those colonies in 1834 carried into full and complete effect. But he was convinced, that the surest way of frustrating our own views and wishes with respect to that experiment, was to bolster and cocker up a system of high prices and high wages in the colonies, by an absolute exclusion of competition here. Now a duty of 63*s.* upon an article worth from 18*s.* to 23*s.* in bond was an absolute prohibition of foreign sugar. Even the hon. Member for Newark had admitted, that slave-grown sugar could not enter the British market when the price of our colonial sugar was under 60*s.*, duty paid. So that the proposed reduction to 36*s.* would not afford any very great practical advantage to the foreigner or any material mischief to the British colonist, if the promises of increased supply so liberally made by Gentlemen opposite came true, while if they failed, the people of this country would have a security against the recurrence of the exorbitant prices of the two preceding

years, by the admission of foreign sugars when the limit of 60s. was past. Now, this modified system of protection for the West Indies he was prepared to sustain, on the simple ground that there were two parties to the bargain, and that Parliament was not entitled to sacrifice the larger interest, that of the consumer, to the interest of the favoured few. The change was perfectly consistent with good faith, for even the hon. Member for Newark must admit, in spite of his declamation on the preceding night, that free competition, and 50 per cent. protection were very different things. The principle of the present system was unsound and untenable, for it was absurd to teach the negro free labourers to keep gigs and drink champagne by a tax levied upon the industrious classes at home. Hon. Gentlemen might talk of extinguishing slavery, but there was only one way of accomplishing it, and that was to prove that free-labour sugar could compete with slave-labour sugar in the markets of the world. The moral advantages of free labour were not disputed by any one, but it was necessary to show, that it would produce sugar as cheap; and this was the argument of the abolitionists in 1834. It was his own. He had quoted the case of Mexico, a great sugar growing country, where free labour had supplanted slave labour, and maintained its ground, though within ten days' sail of the island of Cuba; and the most intelligent West Indian planters had always taken the same view. Mr. Burnley had admitted before the colonial land committee in 1836, that the monopoly of the English market could not be retained, unless the price of sugar was kept down; and he had looked even at that early period to immigration as the source from which an adequate supply of free labourers must be secured. The hon. Member for Kilmarnock had said, that no change in the sugar duties should take place while the experiment of emancipation was in progress. But how long was it to last? For how many years did the hon. Member mean to call upon the people of England, in addition to the 800,000*l.* a-year, with which they were saddled in perpetuity, to pay three or four millions in the way of indirect taxation, for the benefit of West Indian proprietors, for this was the way in which the system worked. He believed, that it would be better for them and for us to teach them to grapple with their difficulties by the stimulus of

competition. He had no wish to see the West Indies relapse into the semi-barbarism of St. Domingo. That would be a state fatal to production—to trade—and, above all, to the prospects of the negro race, who depended upon the issue of the experiment now in progress. But that experiment would fail, and ought to fail, if they allowed the price of one of the necessaries, rather than the comforts, of life to be kept up beyond its natural level at the expense of the English artisan. It was almost a moral obligation to enable the poorer classes in this country to buy sugars at a moderate price, and this competition could alone secure. He had now endeavoured to meet the fair objections alleged against the Government plan. As to the unfair objections, they had been so ably dealt with by those who preceded him, that he had little to add. He warned the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, however, that in political economy he would find religion a very dangerous ally. If he drew the line of moral obligation at all, he must draw it with a bold, unflinching, and impartial hand. He must not denounce slave-grown sugar, nor coquette with slave-grown tobacco, and say, that cotton involved interests so vast that he was not prepared to deal with it at all. He could not, in short, at one time play the moralist, and at another the representative of a great commercial town. Indeed, no more unanswerable illustration of the impracticability of his own principles could be found than this whole question of American trade. The United States were divided into two great sections, in one of which slave-labour, in the other free-labour, prevailed. Cotton, tobacco, and rice, the produce of the slave-owning southern states of America, were readily admitted into this country, but our ports were hermetically sealed against the corn and other produce of the northern states, where slavery did not exist. Foreigners who saw the practice, and heard the principles laid down by the English, must certainly think them a wise, a rational, and a most practical people; for as to hypocrisy, it was a word which he knew must not be mentioned in that House. They were appealed to, however, not only in the name of religion, but of humanity. Now, humanity, in his mind, began at home; and, he was sure, there was not a Member for a manufacturing district, who might feel it his duty to speak on the pre-

sent occasion, who would not come before the House with a tale that proved the decay of trade, and the distress of the whole manufacturing population. From a petition which he had that evening presented from his constituents at Sheffield, it appeared that one-third of the working men in that town and neighbourhood were out of employ, that a great proportion of the remainder were employed only three days in the week, and that the utmost distress in consequence prevailed. Those who were in work subscribed something from their wretched pittance to keep others from the parish who had no work at all. In some trades the whole savings of better days had gone in this way. The grinders alone had spent 11,000*l.* in three years; and from this state of intense suffering, the only hope of escape was in emigration, in the workhouse, or in the adoption of the measure now under the consideration of the House. The petitioners stated, that during the last winter, they had lived on mint and balm tea, coffee and sugar being too dear to come within the scope of their means, and the men thus reduced were skilful and intelligent artisans, accustomed, for many years, to an honourable competency, and able to earn it now, if relieved from those restraints which a most unwise commercial system imposed. Such was the state of things in Sheffield; and the same tale might be heard from Manchester, Leeds, Oldham, Paisley, and other great manufacturing towns. This was a subject which the House could not overlook; a subject which demanded the most serious and prompt attention, for though there were evils that legislation could not reach, this was not one of them. Contrast the condition of the West-Indian labourers with the condition of the labourers in this country. It appeared, from Mr. Gurney's evidence, that the free negro population of the West Indies were in a state of prosperity, in the enjoyment of comforts and luxuries which the mechanics of this country could never hope to obtain. 2,600*l.* had been subscribed by one religious society alone, for missionary purposes—800*l.* by another—a blacksmith and his wife had saved 100*l.* in eight months. They would allow nothing but quarto bibles with gilt edges to be used in their chapels; and in Guiana, a company of free labourers had bought a property worth 60,000 dollars, within two years after the

apprenticeship was at an end. All this was a most satisfactory and desirable state of things, if the natural consequence of prosperous industry, but it was not so. It was the result of so many pence per pound added to the price of sugar in England, and he (Mr. Ward) asked the most ardent well-wishers to the negro race, whether it were possible, that a system so irrational and unjust should be sustained at the expense of the labouring population of this country? Yet it must be maintained unless the House determined to abandon the system of protection, of which the West-Indian monopoly was a part. They had been told, that the protected interests meant to stand or fall together. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire had complained, that the Government had dared to attack the three great monopolies of the country, and had declared, in their name, that they would hear of no compromise. This was an agreeable announcement for the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who was henceforward to lead a party with "no compromise" as its motto; and for the hon. Member for Wakefield (Mr. Lascelles) who, upon a long and intimate acquaintance with his leader, had pronounced him to be a decided free-trader, and who declared, that he should only give him a vote, if he voted at all, under the impression, that if he came into power upon the protective or anti-commercial principle, it would only be to give a death-blow to the system. He rejoiced to hear this declaration, for though the hon. Member for Kilmarnock seemed to think there was a very simple specific for all our financial difficulties, by the simple substitution of a Conservative for a Liberal Government, and expressed his belief, that this opinion would be shared by Sheffield, and every other commercial town, he could see no symptoms of any faith in this panacea. The question was a question of measures, not of men. Not whether Viscount Melbourne, or the right hon. Baronet (the Member for Tamworth) should be at the head of the Government, but what the Government would do? And it did so happen, that on the one side they had the wisest, the most statesmanlike, and far-seeing speech, that he had ever heard in that House; he meant the speech delivered by his noble Friend, the Secretary for the Colonies—a speech identifying a great principle with a great party; and,



on the other, a most uncompromising defence of monopoly and protection from many individual Members, with some vague hopes of improvement from the hon. Member for Wakefield, and no intelligible declaration of principle at all on the part of those whom he acknowledged as his leaders. Now, these might be good party tactics in that House, but they were not calculated to inspire respect or confidence out of it. What did Gentlemen opposite mean to do? To go on with the protective system? He (Mr. Ward) and those around him said, that it had lasted too long already. They had reached the limit of taxation under any system of high duties and restricted supplies. He wished for no better proof of this than the experiment tried by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year, when he had tried to cover the deficiency in the revenue by adding a duty of 5 per cent., and 6d. a gallon upon spirits to the customs and excise. In this course the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, concurred, for he said, that under all circumstances he was not prepared to say, that it was not the wisest course that the Government could have adopted. It was, therefore, pretty much what he could have done himself if in power. And what was the result? The estimate was 2½ millions of increase; but instead of this, the revenue fell off 309,000*l.*, so that allowing 800,000*l.* for the deficiency in the Post-office, the produce of the new duty was 520,000*l.*, of which, 420,000*l.* were produced by the assessed taxes alone. Was this a lesson to be lost? Did it not prove that the sources of taxation were dried up, and the power of consumption decaying? His hon. Friend, the Member for Manchester, had explained this in his admirable argument the night before, by showing, that the use of taxable commodities amongst the working classes must depend upon the prices at which the first necessities of life could be obtained. Dear food was the cause of the falling off in the revenue, 35½ millions of which depended upon consumption; and what better proof could the House require of the necessity of beginning every improvement by making food cheaper, that is, by including the Corn-laws in the change? It was impossible to shirk or evade this question, and the time was come when the decision could not be put off. The people complain, and most justly, that this was a

double system of taxation on the country, one openly avowed, for public purposes, and collected by public offices; the other unavowed and insidious, yet pressing to the same extent as the public taxation upon the springs of our industry for the benefit of sinister interests, and by monopolies, which the law made, and could unmake, when Parliament pleased. The first step towards getting rid of this system had been taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the present Budget—the most important step in his judgment that had been taken for many years, and his right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, had assured them that, in the Customs' Bill, if he were enabled by the decision of the House on the present occasion to bring it in, he would follow out the principle, simplifying the system, removing all unnecessary commercial restraints, and all pressure upon the consuming powers of the people. This was the wisest and safest course. No half measures were possible. To touch one interest, but not other interests, sugar without timber, or either leaving the monstrous monopoly of the English land-lord untouched, would be the height of injustice and inconsistency. Yet, he admitted, that the Corn-laws might seem an aggravation of the difficulties of the Government, from the opposition which they had called forth. The two Members for Lincolnshire, who had already spoken (Mr. Handley and Mr. Heathcote), had told them—the one that an 8*s.* duty upon wheat was an insult, a monstrous proposition—the other, that it could not be seriously intended by the Government. He did not know what the third Member for Lincolnshire (Lord Worsley), who was doing him the honour of taking a note of his remark, would say; but he thought that there must be something peculiar in the atmosphere of that county to account for such views. The only fault that he had to find with the Government plan was, that it gave a great deal more to landlords than they had any right to demand or expect. They had a natural protection of 10*s.* a quarter upon all wheat brought to this country. They gained necessarily by everything that increased the manufacturing prosperity of England, which alone had made them what they were. Population, by its progress, was adding every hour to the value of every acre of the soil. There were 1,000 births daily, and he

(Mr. Ward) could form no calculation as to the future prospects of such a country, if, in lieu of restricting its people to one limited field for their supply of food, they were to give them free access to the markets of the world. He spoke as a man deeply interested in the land, for he had nothing else to look to; and if his stake in it was small, compared with some, it was only the more necessary for him not to deceive himself with false hopes, as to the effects of the change; yet he should have no doubts or fears if the Corn-laws were abolished altogether, provided the other inequalities of our fiscal system were removed at the same time, which the land-owners in that case would have a right to demand. At the same time, he admitted the value of the Government proposition. The advantages of a fixed duty were immense over every conceivable modification of the sliding scale. It would secure steadiness of price, constant intercourse with other countries on known terms, and the power of drawing supplies from the best market at the best time, in exchange for goods, instead of deranging the currency by sudden demands of bullion to buy wheat. All this was most valuable. As to those who denounced the 8*s.* duty as harsh and wicked, because it was direct, and said, as an individual of some note was reported to have said in a place to which he must not more directly allude, "for God's sake, no tax upon the people's bread;" he did not know whether such language inspired most astonishment or disgust; for on the very day in which these words were used, it happened, that the tax upon bread was 24*s.* 8*d.*, with this difference, that the whole amount went into the landlord's pocket, not into the Treasury. He might be told, that the tax was merely nominal, because nobody brought wheat into the market on such terms; but, whatever might be thought in Parliament, people out of Parliament knew perfectly well that a prohibitory duty, whether paid or not, was a tax to the full extent of the difference in price between English and foreign wheat, though the revenue did not get the benefit of it. These were the reasons for which he would give his cordial support to the proposition of the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, that the House should go into a Committee of Ways and Means, for the purpose of considering the changes which the commercial and financial situation of

the country required. He believed the suggestions of the Government would be beneficial to all classes, and injurious to none. He only feared, that they came too late, when he looked to the state of their relations with the United States and the Brazils. They had lost the market of Germany by their vicious commercial system, which laid the foundation of the Prussian League, and they must be prepared to see markets still further restricted, and the population more depressed, unless the House entertained a motion in which the prosperity of England for many years must depend.

Sir R. H. Inglis stated, that he had been anxious to explain the grounds of his vote, because they had not been exactly stated by any one on his side of the House. He had heard different Members complain of the terms of the motion. His right hon. Friend the Secretary at War had this night said, that it meant nothing; the hon. Member for Nottingham had wished, that it had included some expression of sympathy for the distresses of the people at home. For his own part, feeling, he hoped strongly such sympathy, he could have desired, in the present instance, that the question had been simply put to the issue upon the encouragement which the proposed admission of slave-grown sugar would give to slavery and the slave-trade. He should have given a vote with more satisfaction, if the parenthesis in the motion had been omitted, which looked to any supply of sugar from other quarters. He should have given that vote with more satisfaction, also, if there had been no references in it to the specific source of the measure in question, if, in short, it had been an abstract proposition without reference to any government whatever. He looked at this question as one of the highest principle. He should be ashamed of himself, or of any one whom he had called his Friend, if he could have made the slave-trade a party question. [*Cheers.*] He understood that cheer; but he could assure those from whom it proceeded, that he no more accused his noble Friend of using the slave-trade as a party question, than he would plead guilty to it himself. It was true that he had wished that his noble Friend's resolution had referred to the slave-trade exclusively, without any admixture of collateral or subordinate matters; but he felt as absolutely persuaded

of the sincerity of his noble Friend as of his own. The question was not as some seemed to intimate, whether they would or would not adopt the whole budget, alter the timber duties, or alter the Corn-laws. The question was as to the sugar duties. Now he would only premise, that if there be any truth in the proposition, that the demand regulates the supply, and that encouragement will increase the products of human industry, and that the proposed measure will be an advantage to those states whose products are the result of slave labour, then the measure on the Table is a premium on slave labour; then is it an encouragement to the slave-trade. He feared, that the House did not sufficiently individualise the case. Did the House really feel what the slave-trade was and is? Did they realise to themselves the way in which the slaves were obtained? Did they know how, in the dead of night, a peaceful village of Africa was surrounded by armed marauders; and that amid the flames which consumed their houses, the wretched inhabitants were hurried off, parent from child, husband from wife, into hopeless slavery, carried down in fetters for hundreds of miles to the barracoons on the coast? Could he believe that for the sake of a paltry reduction in the price of an article, a luxury, or, if you please, a necessary, the poorest Englishman would consent to encourage such scenes? Did it stop here? Were the horrors of the middle passage forgotten? Did the House forget what was stated in the papers laid on the Table by the Queen's command every year? That the unhappy beings were packed in a way, in which no other living creatures were ever packed? The Secretary for Foreign Affairs had said three years ago, that it could not be called space; it did not deserve such a name. Would an assembly of English Gentlemen, of English Christians, consent to encourage such crime on the one hand, and continue such suffering on the other, for the mere pounds, shillings, and pence, which it might bring into their coffers? Would even the philosophic constituents of the hon. Member for London prefer to have their sugar 1d. a pound cheaper as the price of such enormities? A penny a pound; it was the infinitesimal part of a penny. Look at the further horrors of the system of slavery in Cuba, and in Brazil, when the survivors of the wretched victims

were landed there. He did not undervalue the sufferings of the hand-loom weaver in his dark back room; or of the Highlander, who could neither subsist at home, nor find the means of emigrating elsewhere; he did not think too highly of human nature, yet with all this, he would fearlessly appeal to the hand-loom weavers, and to the Highlanders, and would leave the case to their decision. Would they, for the sake of having twelve lumps of sugar, instead of eleven, consent to continue such atrocities? The hon. Member for Lambeth had referred to the constituents of his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets. He trusted, that he might make the same appeal to them also. But he could not allude to that right hon. Friend without expressing his deep acknowledgment to him for the part which he had taken in this crisis; and for the example which he had set to those who had hitherto professed the same principles. Consistent as all admitted his right hon. Friend to have been in his long service of thirty-five years in this cause, never had he evinced his consistency at a more painful sacrifice. But his country would do him justice. By an all but unanimous feeling, the slave-trade was abolished in 1807. By something nearly like unanimity, slavery was abolished in 1834. Three years ago this House, by an unanimous address, appealed to her Majesty to interpose with all the Great Powers professing Christianity, to the intent that all might declare the slave-trade piracy, and might punish, as guilty of that crime, all who were engaged in that trade. Now what was the effect of the measure before the House? Was it not to place in a better position than that in which they now stand, every slave-holding state which produces sugar? Was it not to give a new premium to the slave-trade? For himself, while he deplored the existing horrors of that trade, he would not act in such a manner as to encourage its extension to the cultivation of one single estate. When, then, we felt the atrocities of the slave-trade, when we expressed our conviction that the declaration, which we had asked from the Great Powers was, under the blessing of God, the best means of suppressing that trade, could the noble Lords, with their present measure on the Table, call upon Spain, Portugal, and Brazil, to act upon that declaration, and punish their subjects as guilty of piracy, in respect to a trade

which we were, indirectly indeed, but still most surely and fatally encouraging? Again he said, this measure gives a new stimulus and premium to the slave-trade, or it is even in the lowest view of the case valueless. It either encourages the sugar of the Brazils and Cuba, and, in that sense, is profitable to the treasury of England, or it is useless. The noble Lords opposite cannot say that it will not encourage the importation of foreign, that is, slave-grown sugar: it is not only their defence, it is their boast. If this be so, when they make the call upon the foreign Powers, what will be their reply? "True, you have passed an unanimous address in the House of Commons, declaring this trade to be piracy; it is easy for you to pass such addresses—they cost you nothing; but when the question is one of pounds, shillings, and pence, what becomes of your Christian feelings, and of your sense of what is due to the natives of Africa?" They would laugh at us, and tell us at once that our object had been from the beginning a commercial speculation, and not a desire to put down the slave-trade or slavery. "You encourage the slave-trade," they would say, "under circumstances from which the only palliation and pretence is, that it is a fiscal measure, necessary for your own finances." Could England, which stood at the head of the moral principles of Europe, if such an objection were made, return more than an imperfect answer by its present Government, whose very boast it was that the measure was to yield money? True, some had argued that it would not yield an addition to the revenue, but the Government must, on their own principles, contend that it would produce financial benefit. There was a lower ground upon which, however, he would never consent to rest his objection to the proposed measure: yet even that lower ground was abundantly tenable. In the first place, that measures taken singly in relation to the sugar duties, was a fatal interference with the success of the great experiment now in progress, by which, when the slaves of England were emancipated at the cost of twenty millions sterling, the world were told that it should be shewn, that free labour would supply better and cheaper the produce which had hitherto been extorted from slave labour. In the issue of that experiment, the slaves all over the world are interested; and every slave-

holding state will look to our example. But if the view be not confined to the single measure of the sugar duties, if they be taken as a part only of the budget, and if the whole budget be regarded at once, then he must say, that it proposed nothing less than a revolution in the entire commercial and colonial and agricultural system of England. To return, however, to his own ground of objection to the specific measure in question. Here he was met by the hon. Member for St. Alban's who had talked of false and spurious humanity, and of the hypocrisy of those who opposed this measure. So far as he (Sir R. Inglis) was conscious of the motives which influenced him, he should have taken precisely the same ground whoever had originated it, and he thought the great mass of the House and of the people of England would make no difference. And at what moment had the Government introduced the measure? At the very time when they had been sending forth, amid the hopes and prayers of the people, a great expedition for the purpose of preventing the slave-trade at its root. He could not refer to that expedition, which had been suggested to her Majesty's Government by an association, with which he had the privilege and the duty of co-operating with his right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets, without acknowledging the cordial support which in every point they had received from her Majesty's Government not only from the noble Lord now at the head of the Colonial Department, but from Lord Normanby, and from Lord Glenelg. But exactly in the proportion in which with one hand they were adopting measures for the suppression of the slave-trade, were they stultifying themselves by the project which they held in their other hand for encouraging it. Such he believed to be the tendency and the effect of their proposition. He could not look back upon the history of the abolition of the slave-trade without desiring to bear his testimony also to the merits of one whom he had the honour of calling his friend, the late Mr. Macaulay, who quietly and unostentatiously, laboriously and unceasingly, had dedicated himself, his fortune, time, and health, to that great work. To him, more than to any one else, in the prosecution of it, were those indebted, who had been placed by Providence in a more prominent station in this cause. For all the reasons which he had given, believing that the measure was

one which encouraged slavery, and perpetuated the slave-trade, he gave his cordial assent to the motion of his noble Friend, by which that measure would be defeated.

Mr. Charles Wood was anxious to have addressed the House when the hon. Member for Stamford sat down, not, he could assure the House, for the purpose of renewing his controversy with the hon. Baronet as to the naval estimates, on the result of which controversy however, when it had taken place he had no reason to look back with regret. He had been anxious to express his satisfaction, that at last some hon. Gentleman on the opposite side of the House had broken through those narrow bounds within which the noble Lord who moved the amendment (Lord Sandon) had endeavoured to limit it; bounds within which, however much they might suit a party purpose, or be expressive of the peculiar views of the noble Lord himself, the House could not properly confine themselves with a due regard to those important interests which the present discussion involved. The hon. Baronet had alluded to some words in the motion of the noble Lord, respecting the present prospects of the importation of East India Sugar, which in the opinion of the hon. Baronet had better have been omitted; he agreed, that the omission of those words would have made the motion more consistent with the high principles professed on this occasion by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and on which the hon. Baronet was prepared to act; but he doubted whether the motion of the noble Lord would then have served the purpose for which it was intended. That which the House had now to consider was this—upon what basis and principles the future commercial code of this country should be settled; and by that means the revenue of the country should be made equal to its expenditure. That was the question which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had brought before the House. They were about to go into a Committee of Ways and Means for the purpose of deciding that question, but the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Sandon) thought proper to interpose an amendment. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies, had stated distinctly the principle on which they were about to raise the revenue to an amount equal to the exigencies of the State, not

by imposing fresh burthens on the people, but by a revision of protecting duties, thus affording relief to the manufacturers and consumers in this country, at the same time that they obtained the requisite revenue. This was the proposed system of finance which hon. Gentlemen opposite resisted. He could have wished that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had brought the question more distinctly before the country, and that his noble Friend the Secretary for the Colonies had brought forward as a substantive question the amendment which he proposed to move in the event of the motion of the noble Member for Liverpool being carried. It would then have appeared more clearly to the country what the question really was which the House had to decide. Not that it mattered much whether the system of the Government was one which was to be resisted as a whole, or whether it was to be met and defeated in detail. It mattered little to the manufacturing population, who were looking for relief from their present distresses to the financial measures proposed by Government, whether each portion of those measures was thrown out by itself, or whether they were disposed of as a system. The House had heard from the hon. Member for Stamford, from the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, and from other hon. Members on the other side of the House, large professions of their attachment to the principles of free trade; and he had heard with pleasure the expression of an opinion on the part of the hon. Member for Beverley (Mr. Hogg) in favour of relieving from taxation all articles included in the necessary consumption of the poor; but he was not a little astonished to find that the conclusion which the hon. Member arrived at was, that to effect this desirable object it was proper to resist a reduction of duty on sugar. The Member for Lambeth had expressed his surprise at the conduct of the Member for Beverley who had advocated the soundest principles of free trade, when contending for the admission of East India Sugar on equal terms with that from the West Indies. His hon. Friend quite forgot the difference of feeling extending he feared far beyond the Member for Beverley, between the time when a person is struggling for admission into a privileged class, and the time when having obtained admission himself he is only too ready to join in closing

the door against those who still remain outside. He was curious to know to what extent the hon. Member for Beverly and the hon. Member for Kilmarnock (who had also professed an attachment to free trade principles) were disposed to go in support of their liberal commercial views. At present, they both resisted the reduction of the duty on sugar. He should be glad to know whether they would turn round upon the hon. Member for Whitby (Mr. A. Chapman), when he should resist the reduction of duty on timber, notwithstanding he had so gallantly come forward to resist the reduction of duty on sugar. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Handley) and others, were known to entertain no objection to the reduction of duty on sugar, but they entertained a strong opinion in favour of the Corn-laws, and they avowedly opposed the proposition, in order, that they might with more consistency defend the monopolies in which they were themselves interested. Would the hon. Members for Beverley and Kilmarnock be so ungrateful as to vote for a reduction of duty on corn, after the hon. Member for Lincolnshire had so generously resisted the reduction of a duty on their own monopoly—sugar? And, if they did, what would the country think of the sincerity of their professions and principles? Much had been said upon the question of slavery and the slave-trade. The argument founded on this ground had been urged by some hon. Gentlemen opposite as if they supposed, that those who sat on the Ministerial side of the House had very short memories, and were totally forgetful of the conduct which, for years, many of those Gentlemen had pursued on this subject. He had no wish to refer to individuals, but remembering the arguments in favour of maintaining slavery, which he had heard for years back, on the part of the West-Indian body, he could not attach much weight to the new views which they now put forward, and which he could not but attribute more to the change which had taken place in their interest, than to any change in their feelings. The hon. Member for Stamford (Sir G. Clerk), had spoken of what his party had done for the abolition of the slave-trade and slavery. He (Mr. C. Wood), for one, did not wish to claim any exclusive credit to his own party for all that had been done for the purpose of putting an end to the horrors

of that system; but he must remind the hon. Member for Stamford, that the best exertions of those who were eminent on his side of politics—even the exertions of Mr. Wilberforce and of Mr. Pitt—achieved but little. The slave-trade was put down by the Whig Administration of 1806. The resolutions proposed by Mr. Canning, in 1823 or 1824, remained but little better than waste paper till the fatal blow was given, in 1834. It was to the Whigs, that what had been done was mainly due, and the system had been finally put an end to, by the bill brought in under Lord Grey's Government, by his noble Friend opposite (Lord Stanley). He admitted, that there were many who urged this argument, whose sincerity was beyond all doubt. For their scruples, he entertained the sincerest respect. Nobody could but admire the long and consistent course of the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets in advocating the cause of the negro. He felt the greatest respect for the views of his hon. Friend who had just sat down; and who had drawn in such vivid colours, the miseries of the slave-trade. He thought, however, that they both took a most exaggerated view of the degree of encouragement to the slave-trade, which the measure now before the House could possibly give; and he thought they directed their humane feelings too exclusively to the negro population, and far too little to the state of our suffering population at home. If they would consider the state of the free negro population in the West Indies, as depicted in the accounts read by his noble Friend, the Secretary for the Colonies, and whose welfare it was supposed, that this measure would injure, and contrast it with that of the lower classes of our manufacturing population, as given in the reports of the commissioners of inquiry into the state of the handloom weavers, they would find the latter far greater objects of commission, and in far greater need of relief. With two exceptions, little reference had been made to the wretched state of so large a portion of the population of this country; and the two Members who had referred to it, both voted against the proposal of the Government, which would afford them some relief. The hon. Baronet (Sir R. Inglis), opposed the measure on principle. If they were to fight it upon principle, let some intelligible principle be laid down. He had heard no attempt at an answer to

the representations which had been made as to the infinitely small proportion of encouragement which this measure would give compared with the immense encouragement which we were at present giving by our commercial policy to the slave-trade, and upon which he had never heard any remonstrance on the score of humanity. The hon. Member for Sheffield had referred to the enormous importation into this country of slave-grown cotton. He had not heard of any one who was for reducing that amount of importation. But we went further; cotton might be considered necessary for our great manufacturing population. We took a vast amount of slave-grown tobacco—not a necessary in any man's estimation; in the opinion of many, a deleterious drug. Did any one advocate stopping this trade? Had we not, on the contrary, utterly prohibited the growth of tobacco in Ireland, where, as an object of cultivation, it might have produced great benefits, in the fear lest Irish tobacco might come to compete with slave-grown tobacco. We ensured, by direct legislation, a positive monopoly to slave-grown tobacco. But it might be said, that was necessary for the sake of the revenue. Where, then, was the principle of hon. Gentlemen opposite? But, then, again, there was the case of slave-grown coffee. Was there any one who would deny, that we gave advantages to the slave-grown coffee of Brazil, over the free-labour coffee of St. Domingo? The slave-grown coffee of Brazil was admitted by the system of carrying it round by the Cape of Good Hope; which could not be done with the coffee produced by free cultivation in Hayti, from the situation of that island. If we relaxed our code and imported coffee direct from both places, the free-grown coffee would have the advantage. He should like to ask the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Dr. Lushington) to say whether there was any difference in principle between importing slave-grown Brazilian sugar for the purposes of the refiner, with a view to be re-exported to our own colonies, and importing it for the use of the British consumer? He should like to know what distinction could be drawn between the two cases which would justify the right hon. Gentleman in allowing the importation in one case, and refusing it in the other. [*Hear! hear!*] His noble Friend opposite (Lord Stanley) cheered

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him; he would defy even his noble Friend's ingenuity to point out a distinction in principle between the two cases. But this was not the whole case. His right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade had stated last night, and stated truly, that to whatever extent we exported our manufactured goods to the Brazils, we were paid for them by slave-grown produce. They had no other mode of making payment. Sometimes we imported directly, this slave-grown produce, as he had stated: more generally we carried the slave-grown sugar to continental markets, and disposing of it there, brought home the goods obtained in exchange. When the latter mode of payment took place, did any body mean to maintain, that the same encouragement was not given to the employment of slave-labour as if we were paid directly by returns of slave-grown produce, whether it were sugar or any other article? But the noble Lord opposite (Lord Sandon) seemed to hold, that the intermediate process made all the difference, and the circuit washed away the impurity of the transaction; if he could think that a whit less encouragement was given to slavery by the indirect method of payment, than if slave-grown sugar came in payment direct to England. So long as we sent goods at all to Brazil, and were paid in slave-grown produce, we may be said to encourage slavery. The hon. Baronet told the House that this country would lose its character for consistency with foreign nations if they adopted measures that would tend to give encouragement to slavery, might they not, he would ask, be more justly charged with inconsistency when it appeared to foreign nations that, for the benefit of a few sugar refiners and sugar carriers, they scrupled not to import slave-grown sugar, while, without any visible line of distinction, they refused to admit that sugar for the benefit of the consumers, and that solely for the purpose of maintaining those very monopolies, for the abolition of which, in other countries, this nation was most loudly calling, but of which we refused to set the example. There was another consideration which he could not avoid pressing on the attention of the House. It had been stated by the hon. Member for Nottingham, and he grieved to say, on the authority of one whom no one could question on this subject, Sir F. Bux-

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ton, that, too truly, all our efforts to put down the foreign slave-trade, had for many years only aggravated its horrors. In the last two or three years, the treaties which had been concluded, and the vigorous exertions of our cruisers had diminished the trade to some extent; but if for so many years our best efforts had been so ineffectual, might not some other means be tried. If, then, there were the slightest hope that by a new treaty with the Brazils, or by an improved communication arising from concessions and accommodations, which the people of that country would probably be inclined to ask of us at the expiration of the present treaty, in 1842—if, he said, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs had the slightest hope that by such means we should be enabled to mitigate in any degree the character of the slavery of that country, would it not be well worthy of his hon. Friend (Sir R. Inglis) to consider whether the obstacles which he would throw in the way of the renewal of that treaty upon advantageous terms, by opposing this measure, would not tend materially to frustrate the desirable object of the amelioration for which all were so anxious. He next came to consider the question with reference to the state of our population at home, and he was sure that no Gentleman acquainted with the manufacturing districts would deny, that no such state of depression and despondency as the present had ever been known in those districts. He had received many accounts from the district with which he was connected: he would read one from a letter which he had received two days ago. The writer stated:—

“That no man could support himself by his business. At this moment the depression has deepened to such an alarming degree, that confidence is altogether shaken, and trade literally paralysed. Feilden’s (that is the hon. Member for Oldham) began to work short time last week, four days per week. In South Lancashire that time is general. Short time to workmen who can but just live on full time wages, is slow-wasting famine, with pestilence on its heels.”

He did not believe that statement to be exaggerated; and it received confirmation from the accounts in the report of the hand-loom weaver commissioners, who had the best opportunity of judging of the state of our manufacturing population. Without troubling the House with many details, he would confine himself to read-

ing a short extract from that report. It stated, that with almost all the labouring classes low wages produced immediate distress, and want of employment immediate destitution. The commissioners did not believe, that any one who had not mixed with the working classes could adequately conceive how much mental and bodily suffering, how much despondency and disease, were implied in the vague terms, “a fall of wages,” or, “slack demand for labour.” If this was the case with merely a slack demand for labour; he would leave Gentlemen to imagine what it must be when they were employed only four days in a week. Now to what measure, except to some measure for the improvement of the trade of the country, did the House look for any permanent improvement of the condition of these persons? He was not a little sorry last night to hear hon. Gentlemen running down and deprecating the foreign trade of this country. The House had been told by those who were the advocates of the agricultural interest, that it was on the home demand that the trade of this country depended for its prosperity. What had been the state of the agricultural interest during the last three years? Would anybody say, that the price of agricultural produce had not been high, and the agricultural interest so far in a fair and prosperous condition? If the doctrine which the advocates of that interest put forth were true, then the manufacturers, instead of being in a state of despondency, ought to be in a state of prosperity. But the fact we knew to be otherwise. We knew, that for the last six years in the manufacturing districts wages had been gradually sinking, whilst the price of corn had been gradually rising. He had a statement, showing what had been the wages in Halifax and Bradford, of three descriptions of workmen, and what the price of corn during the last seven years. It appeared that corn had risen from 46s. 2d. in 1834 to 65s. 9d. in 1840, while wages in that time had fallen with one description of workmen from 10s. to 6s. 9d.; with a second description from 14s. to 10s.; and with a third description from 18s. to 13s. 6d. If any Gentleman had read attentively the report to which he had referred, he would find it universally stated, that the comfort, the health, and almost the existence of the labourer depended upon the low price of corn. What



was the statement in one of the papers put forward by the West-Indian body? That the greater consumption of sugar in certain years was owing not to the price of sugar; but to the low price of corn. It had been repeated in the House. Did not this mean, that when the working man had less to pay for his necessary bread, he had more to spend on comforts; or on such necessaries as sugar? But it did not stop here. As it was emphatically said in the handloom commissioners' report, when bread was cheap, the labouring classes clothed themselves. To what could they attribute the present state of the manufacturing interest except to the state of our foreign trade? It was the absence of foreign demand which reduced the manufacturing interest and manufacturing population to this state; and what was the cause of the absence of foreign demand? He was astonished at hearing an hon. Member who represented the colonial interest, state the small amount of exports to Brazil as a proof that taking the sugar grown in the Brazils would not increase our foreign trade. He (Mr. C. Wood) thought they had lived beyond the time when hon. Gentlemen supposed that British goods could be sent to other countries, unless the English were prepared to take something from those countries in return. The small amount of exports from this country was pretty well accounted for, when our fiscal regulations were such as prevented us from receiving articles from those countries in return. It seemed absolutely impossible to push demonstration further than this, that the state of the manufacturing population was owing to a want of foreign demand, and that the want of foreign demand could only be attributed to our vicious commercial code. There was evidence in that much-disputed and much-quoted report of the Import duties' committee, that this want of comfort, and, in some instances, of almost the necessaries of life, owing to the high price of corn, was not confined to the manufacturing population, but extended to the agricultural labourers. There was most clear evidence given by a manufacturer of Leicester, that at the time when the price of corn was high, the agricultural labourers could not afford to purchase the necessary articles of clothing, and the cheap woollen hosiery, which was one of the staple articles of the manufactures of Leicester; and he stated, not as

a matter of opinion but of fact, that the commercial travellers of Leicester who went through the agricultural districts, reported, that the demand in the agricultural districts was quite as slack in the time of the high price of corn, as the demand in the manufacturing districts for the self-same articles. It had become a maxim with the manufacturers, that whenever corn was high, the demand for the necessary goods used by the lower classes was as much reduced in the agricultural as in the manufacturing districts. But it was undoubtedly upon the great masses of our manufacturing population that our restrictive system and protecting duties pressed most severely. Upon them it pressed with double force, by checking trade and preventing the payment of adequate wages, and, at the same time, increasing the prices of those articles on which wages were spent, and he appealed therefore to the House not to accede to the motion of the noble Member for Liverpool which would defeat the first step in removing those restrictions. He conceived, that the interests of a vast majority of the people were deeply concerned in this removal. He admitted, that some few might suffer. He was ready to admit, that the return of the West-India proprietors might be smaller, and that some of the shipowners might be obliged to break up some of those old and unseaworthy vessels in which for years they had risked the lives of their fellow-creatures, and in some degree to prevent which, it had been necessary to introduce a bill into that House; and he admitted further, to the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, that some landlords might be obliged to reduce the rents of their land. As one of that protected class, he was willing to forego his individual advantage for the sake of the general good; he did not rate that advantage so highly as others, but whatever it was, he considered his interests much more bound up with the welfare of the State at large, than with the prosperity of any particular class. One of the most essential features of the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was, that while it would afford relief to trade, it was an important measure of finance; and here he must express his surprise at the mode in which it had been met on the other side of the House, where it was treated merely as a party move. The hon. Member for Kilmarnock

accused the Ministerial side of the House of making use of commercial measures for party purposes. Never was accusation more unjust. They had supported Mr. Huskisson against his own friends in his commercial policy. The hon. Member seemed to forget which side of the House it was, who made the timber duties a party question in 1831—and even in the present motion, the hon. Member who opposed the commercial policy of the Government professing himself the advocate of free trade, and suggested as the only remedy for the existing financial difficulties, the removal of the present Government from office, would hardly convince the world that his mind was free from party considerations. Hon. Gentlemen objected to the time of the proposal. It might have been better to have brought forward this measure last year; but he very much doubted whether the hon. Member for Newark would have thought it better, when there was no financial pressure, and when there was no immediate necessity for doing so. But some hon. Members, and especially the hon. Member for Beverley (Mr. Hogg), had objected to the plan on the score of finance. His first statement was, that the country would be inundated with Brazilian sugar, and his next, that not a farthing would be added to the revenue. Now, both of these assertions could not be true: if the country were inundated with Brazilian sugar, the calculated revenue must necessarily be raised. If Brazilian sugar were not brought into the market, then the ruin the hon. Member anticipated to our colonies could never afflict them. Which horn of the dilemma did he choose? It did not appear to him (Mr. C. Wood) to be difficult to see, from papers and calculations before the House, that the revenue which his right hon. Friend calculated he should derive from this measure would be raised. The revenue would be raised, if, in consequence of a larger consumption of sugar, a larger importation took place. The consumption would be larger if a reduction of price took place than what it had been last year. The evidence taken before the Import Duties Committee gave reason to suppose, that at a retail price of from 5½ to 6½ per pound the consumption might be extended in a very great degree. The retail price of 6½ per pound was 60s. 8d. per cwt. and if his right hon. Friend ensured, that sugar should be imported at

that price his object was attained. Whether the sugar came from the Brazil, or from the East or the West Indies, the consumption would be certain, and the revenue would be raised. The essential point was the price. If the West-Indian or East-Indian sugar was sold at 60s. 8d. the consumption was certain; but the only security that this would be the case was, providing that if it was not, other sugar should be admitted, which would be sold at that price. This the Chancellor of the Exchequer's measure did. The proposed duty of 36s. on foreign sugar, added to the present price of Brazilian sugar, would admit it for consumption at about 60s. per cwt. Hon. Gentlemen opposite asserted, that an adequate supply for the year 1841, would come from the West and East Indies. That might be the case; but the measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was the best and the only security that the price of such sugar should be sufficiently low for increased consumption; and that if those hopes were disappointed, neither the consumer nor the revenue should suffer. Hon. Gentlemen disputed the point, that the lowering of prices increased consumption. In no instance had there been a remarkable increase or decrease of consumption of sugar, which was not consequent upon an increase or a decrease of price, as might be seen from the returns. If the consumption per head in 1841 were the same as that of 1831, the imports to make up for the increased consumption according to the population would, at a duty of 24s., produce an increased revenue of 937,000*l*. If so, he did not think, that the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, could be accused of having taken an improbable estimate of the increased revenue when he had estimated it at only 700,000*l*.; and, if this were to be admitted to be correct he should wish to know how the right hon. Gentleman opposite could speak of the calculations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as utterly groundless. There was still a question of the greatest importance behind. If the proposal of Government were defeated, what was to be the alternative? If an increase of revenue were not to be looked for from this proposed scheme, if the present deficiency were not to be supplied by a method which would, at the same time, extend our trade and relieve our manufactures, in what way did the other side of

the House propose to supply it? Was an increase of revenue to be obtained from an alteration of the timber duties? When hon. Gentlemen opposite were in power, an alteration of the timber duties was a favourite mode of raising revenue. Did they merely look upon this question as a means of removing their political adversaries from the offices they wished to occupy? And if they succeeded, would they turn round upon his hon. Friend, the Member for Whitby? Were they to look for the increase of the revenue from the timber trade, or from some modification of the present scheme? He should like to know how the revenue for the year was to be made good. He understood, that some hon. Gentlemen fancied, that if the right hon. Member for Tamworth came into power, he would relieve them from all difficulty by proposing a vote of credit, or a loan for the year. He thought such expectations would be altogether disappointed. He (Mr. C. Wood) thought, that it was the only financial error of Ministers, that they had pushed the loan system too far. Last year, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated—and the statement met with general assent—that it was impossible to carry on that system longer; and he, therefore, proposed an augmentation of the taxes. The mode of taxation then tried had utterly failed to raise the income of the country to a level with the expenditure. While Lord Althorp was in office he had relieved the kingdom from a burden of seven millions of taxes, at a loss of only two millions of revenue; and the present proposal sought to carry that wise principle further, and, while the revenue was provided, to afford aid to most valuable interests. But what had the right hon. Member for Tamworth said last year, on the subject of loans—and he agreed in every word which fell from the right hon. Baronet—he said, it was discreditable for a great country like this, to be reduced to loans to meet its expenditure, in time of peace; and that we ought not to have recourse to the miserable expedient of staving off such burthens from our own shoulders, in order to force them on our posterity. He said, that the deficiency being evidently of a permanent character, he should have opposed a loan if the Government had proposed it: and it is impossible for him, therefore, now, to propose such a course himself, with every

argument which he then used, further strengthened by the additional experience of this year. Of one thing Gentlemen might be well assured, that whatever Government was in power, they would not make the income equal to the outlay by reverting to the system of loans. What, then, he again asked, was to be the alternative of the other side? Doubtless, many hon. Members might prefer the imposition of direct taxes, and at least that would be an honest straightforward mode of meeting the difficulty; but whether it could be adopted with any chance of success in the present state of the country was another question; and he doubted much whether hon. Gentlemen who were so warmly opposed to the present proposition, would themselves find it convenient to vote for the infliction of direct taxes. Would they revive the tax upon salt and candles, removed expressly for the relief and benefit of the poorer classes? Would they re-impose the house-tax? or were they to fall back in a time of peace upon what had always been held as a last resource in this country, and which had been taken off with the universal assent of the people—he meant the property-tax? Many were in favour of a tax of that kind; he could not agree with them. He agreed again with an opinion expressed by the right hon. Member for Tamworth, and believed, that it was a tax most inexpedient and unwise to propose in time of peace, and that it ought to be kept back justly and properly as a reserve for war. But if they were not to propose that tax, he wanted to know from hon. Gentlemen what resources they were to look to? He must object, in the present depressed state of the country, to adding to its burdens, to raise the revenue before the experiment of relieving it from taxation had been tried. The only source that he knew of was, so to improve our trade as to add to our customs' revenue, and by improving the condition of the consumer, enable him to consume a larger amount of articles paying customs and excise. This was the only mode which hon. Members could take to avert that taxation, which must fall otherwise on themselves. There were other and higher considerations relating to the depressed condition of so large a portion of our population; and, whether they consulted their interests or their feelings, to the same conclusion they must come—that they must endeavour to im-

prove the state of the manufacturing interest, and what was still more important, the condition of the manufacturing population. There were other considerations arising from the state of feeling in large masses of our population, of which we had had some experience in the last two or three years, and which ought to have weight with the House. It was most necessary to conciliate and to maintain their good will, and to inspire them with confidence in the Legislature. He would not press this topic further, the importance of which he was convinced every body who heard him would feel. These considerations, however, whether as regarding their mere interest, or the welfare and prosperity of the country, and still more their feelings of humanity weighed so heavily with him, that he was not without hope that the House would even yet consent to take into consideration the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Whether they did so or not, he could not avoid expressing his conviction, in common with many other hon. Members, that the present state of the country was such, that measures like those now proposed could not be much longer deferred. It might be that they would be carried by other hands, it might be that they would be adopted with modifications, it might be that they would be brought forward when greater ruin and distress had forced the consideration of them more imperatively on the House; but fully convinced he was, that sooner or later, and that too at no very distant period, those hon. Gentlemen who now came forward as the advocates of monopoly would find their expectations disappointed, and that, for the general benefit of the country, protected interests must part with a portion of their protection.

Mr. Goulburn said, that when he reflected that the period at which he was called on to address the House against, the admission of foreign slave-grown sugar to the British market, was the precise period which, by the Act of Emancipation of the negroes of the West Indies, was fixed as the first year in which the population of those colonies should enjoy perfect freedom, and when he reflected also that, the period originally fixed had been anticipated by three years by the voluntary act of the colonists themselves, when he reflected on these circumstances, he could not but consider what would have

been the feelings of the House and the country if, when his noble Friend near him first proposed the Act of Emancipation, he had accompanied it with a proposition, that so soon as the apprenticeship should cease, the slave-trade of foreign countries should have all the advantages, which we could confer by opening a new market for slave-grown sugar. If any man, whatever might be his political opinions, had then stated, that that would be the proceeding of 1841, he would have been charged with indulging imaginary apprehension; he would have been told that Great Britain, immediately after the accomplishment of an act of justice to the negro-population of the West Indies, could never deprive that population of those advantages which they possessed in the market of this country, that such a return for the surrender by the colonists of the remaining portion of the apprenticeships would be a course of proceeding which no government could recommend, and which no House of Commons could ever sanction. A Government, he regretted to say, had been found to recommend it; but the House of Commons, he trusted had not been found which would sanction it. In this view of the question, it mattered not whether the measure was brought forward as one of finance or of commercial regulation. The Government, however, urged it as a measure of finance, resting upon the ground of the extreme necessities of the country. He did not deny, that there was a pressure on the finances demanding immediate attention; but in admitting that, he felt bound to add, that those who were responsible for the crisis, were bound to propose an adequate remedy. It was not sufficient for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the head of the Government, to say he proposed to obtain 700,000*l.* a-year, by a reduction of the duty on foreign sugar, and to be absolutely silent as to the mode in which that amount of revenue was to be realized. The right hon. Gentleman, who had neglected to supply the House with those details, which they had a right to expect, was followed by the noble Lord at the head of the Government, and he favoured them with an explanation which clearly showed, that as a measure of revenue their proposition of reducing the duty on foreign sugar was altogether inefficient. They (the Conservatives) had been taunted by the hon. Member for Halifax, with

having adopted two inconsistent modes of argument, saying on the one hand that our British possessions would be ruined by the introduction of foreign sugar, and, on the other, that the introduction of foreign sugar would produce no revenue. The hon. Member said, that they could not be right in both of these assertions. He agreed with him that they could not; but then they were necessarily driven into those two lines of argument, because the right hon. Gentleman had put before them two inconsistent propositions. The fault was not in the replies to those propositions, but in the propositions themselves. He should like to know how the Chancellor of the Exchequer, proposed to raise this 700,000*l.* from a reduction of the duty on foreign sugar? He (Mr. Goulburn) could readily understand that from sugar such a sum might easily be raised. The right hon. Gentleman required no more from the article than was raised from it in 1828, when it produced above 6,000,000*l.* In that year it was true there was an additional duty of 1*s.* 9*d.* a cwt., but what were the circumstances of the market at that time? Foreign sugar was entirely excluded, East-India sugar was equally excluded by a restrictive duty of 10*s.*, nearly as high as that proposed to be given as a protection against the sugar of the Brazils, and by a further prohibitory duty on rum. Notwithstanding that prohibition upon foreign sugar, and that restriction upon domestic sugar, our other colonial possessions furnished an ample supply, and the revenue exceeded, by 600,000*l.*, that received in the last year. The power, therefore, of raising a large additional revenue from sugar did not depend upon their reducing or retaining the duties upon the foreign article. It depended upon the quantity of sugar brought into the market, and whether that quantity would be sufficient to effect such a reduction in the price as to produce an increased consumption. Now, it appeared, from the confession of the Government themselves, that we were to have this year a quantity of sugar in the market greater by many tons than we had in 1828, when the sum raised from sugar was that which the right hon. Gentleman opposite now desired to raise. The effect of his measure of reduction could only be to substitute a certain quantity of Brazilian or Cuba sugar for the sugar of British possessions. But for every quantity of sugar

so displaced they occasioned a commensurate incitement to the slave-trade, which until now they had been uniformly desirous of suppressing. He would not respond to the call of the hon. Member for Halifax, by entering into a general financial discussion on the present occasion. It was not the duty of those who were acting independently of the Government to introduce a discussion of that kind; but when the hon. Member asked how hon. Gentlemen on his (Mr. Goulburn's) side of the House would obtain the required amount of revenue from sugar, he would tell him — by leaving things alone. The promised supply of 240,000 tons of sugar from the East and West Indies would insure a reduction of price sufficient to increase the revenue for the ensuing year. Of this supply the Government had no doubt, for it was their own calculation, and if they were right the revenue must increase. The hon. Member for Halifax complained of the unwillingness of his (Mr. Goulburn's) side of the House to take this opportunity of entering into a general discussion of commercial policy; but, with every deference to the hon. Member, he did not think, that the readiest way of performing the business of the country was by flying from the question submitted to their consideration, to general and desultory discussions. The question before them related to the sugar duties, and to it he would confine his observations. The hon. Member told them that they were resisting all reduction of duty. They were doing no such thing. They did not deny, that a general reduction of duty leading to a reduction of price was a great benefit to the community; but they did deny, that the reduction of duty on foreign sugar, as explained by the noble Lord, could influence the price. For what were the views of the noble Lord? that foreign sugar could only enter into consumption when the average price in the British market exceeded 6*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* It was under these circumstances that he anticipated a great increase of consumption, but such an anticipation was at direct variance with all past experience. Looking to the returns of the last fifteen years, they would find, that in five only of those years had the price attained to 6*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.*, and that in every case in which it had so attained, there had been in each year a considerable decrease in consumption. His (Mr. Goulburn's) belief was, that without any new legislation the price of sugar

would be (indeed it was so at present) below that which the noble Lord had fixed as its minimum; and therefore, with a view to the interests of the consumer, as well as to those of the Colonists, he saw no reason to adopt the proposal of the Government. The hon. Member for Halifax, had accused them of want of sympathy and feeling for the poor, who were suffering from the privation of this necessary article, and great pains had been taken by hon. Members opposite to contrast the condition of the artisan in the north of England with the negro of the West Indies. But surely he (Mr. Goulburn) ought to be at liberty to express his gratification at the prosperity of the negro without it being imputed to him that he was insensible to the misfortunes of his own countrymen. He sincerely felt for them, and would heartily lend his best endeavours to relieve them from their present distressed condition; but he could not bring his mind to believe, that the proposed reduction upon foreign sugar was a measure which would afford them relief, or one for which, according to the hon. Member for Halifax, they ought to be thankful. When the Government arrogated to themselves the merit of having framed their budget, with a view to the relief of the poor, it must not be forgotten in what that relief consisted; in a reduction of the price of sugar so infinitely small, that it could not reach the consumer, and in the imposition of a double duty on that particular species of timber most used in the dwellings of the poor and thus sensibly enhancing the expense of their habitations. But he was told the proposal of Government was also to be regarded as a great commercial measure and this was the favourite topic of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, who accused him (Mr. Goulburn), and his friends of being insensible to the advantages to be derived from the foreign trade of the kingdom. Nothing was further from the fact. For himself he could say, that as the greater part of his political life had been in connexion with a Government of which Mr. Huskisson formed a part, and as he cordially concurred in supporting his measures, he did not think he was open to the charge of being insensible to the advantages of foreign trade. That trade, he, in common with Mr. Huskisson, considered most important, but also, in common with Mr. Huskisson, he thought, the colonial trade

yet more valuable, and was not prepared to neglect or to abandon it. The difficulty in which the Government stood with respect to their measure, as one of finance, was in no degree diminished by regarding it as a measure of commercial policy. They told the House, on the one hand, that enormous advantages would be derived from a sugar trade with Brazil, while, on the other, they alleged that Brazilian sugar could not come into consumption. How are these two assertions to be reconciled, and what becomes of all the arguments made use of by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. He had stated, that there were two grounds for regarding the present as the particular moment at which a reduction of the duty on Brazil sugar could be made with advantage, the one, that there was a considerable dissatisfaction in the Brazils on account of the conduct of this country; and the other, that the existing treaty with that country was so near the period of its expiration, that it was desirable before that period arrived to enter into some more extended arrangement. In considering the cause of the dissatisfaction between this country and Brazil, the right hon. Gentleman would excuse him if he did not ascribe it to precisely the same cause as that which the right hon. Gentleman had stated. He had told the House that it arose from commercial restrictions which this country imposed on the introduction of commodities from Brazil; but from the papers that had been laid before the House, it appeared that the great dissatisfaction in Brazil, towards this country, was, not so much on account of her restrictive duties as on account of the measures, which this country had taken for the abolition of the slave-trade. In the reports annually laid before the House from the commissioners established there, it appeared that they were exposed to a great degree of insult and ill-feeling, not only from the lower, but from the better classes of the inhabitants, founded upon the impediments which they offered to the introduction of new slaves. A dissatisfaction so arising they must make up their minds to bear, unless they were prepared either to relax their direct efforts for the abolition of that trade, or to give it by the admission of their sugar an effective though indirect encouragement for the abolition of that

trade. He knew that hon. Gentlemen were not prepared to take the former course; that many who would vote for the introduction of foreign commodities which were the produce of slave labour, would be shocked at the idea of the efforts for suppressing that trade being relaxed. But he saw no distinction between pacifying the dissatisfaction of Brazil by abandoning their plighted faith with regard to the suppression of the slave-trade and admitting to British markets the productions of the slave-trade, which but for the continuance of that trade could not be introduced here with advantage. And this led him to an argument which had been made use of both by the right hon. Member for Edinburgh and the hon. Member for Halifax, in which they attempted to deny, that the admission of Brazilian sugar could by possibility be in any degree regarded as a question of principle, or as connected with the abolition of the slave-trade. That argument had been already dealt with most triumphantly by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, but the manner in which it had been repeated made it necessary for him to advert to it again. The hon. Gentleman said :—

“ You encourage the cotton and tobacco of America, which are grown in slave countries ; and you take the cotton and coffee of Brazil ; why, then, do you refuse Brazilian sugar ? ”

There was a very obvious answer. It was this, and it applied equally to that other anomaly which had been pointed out, with regard to refining Brazilian sugar for exportation. We do take the cotton and tobacco of America, a country which has ceased to carry on the slave-trade ; we do receive the cotton and coffee of Brazil, because by so doing, we open no new market for slave produce, give no new encouragement to the introduction of slaves from Africa. Admit their sugars, however, and you do open a new market which has never yet been accessible to Brazil, and, instead of confining them to those countries in Europe to which they have hitherto had access, give them admission to this country, which, from the extent of its population, and its wealth, is, without doubt, the best sugar market in the world. The question is, whether you will thus give this incitement to the slave-trade of Brazil, and in doing so, drive from your market the produce of your own colonies, or whether you will continue still

to exclude Brazil, and so to increase at the same time the produce of your own possessions, as to enable you to combat the sugar of Brazil in the different markets of the Continent. Take the first of these courses, and you can scarcely calculate the impulse which you will give to the aggravated horrors of the slave-trade, rendered more profitable by your own act of injudicious liberality, adopt the other, and there is a hope that you may establish the superiority of free over slave labour, even in the cultivation of sugar. With respect to the other argument, founded on the expiration of the treaty, he was far from denying the great advantage which attached to this trade with Brazil, and he was as anxious as any man that the negotiation for a renewal of the treaty should be attended with success ; but he might doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman in suggesting a reduction of the sugar duty at this moment took the best means for securing that object which in every foreign treaty it was the duty of this country to pursue—namely, that effective measures should be taken for the abolition of the slave-trade. The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, had alluded to the treaty with the state of Texas, and had justly complimented the Foreign Secretary for having refused to sign the treaty acknowledging the independence of that state, until he obtained from them an admission of the right of search, so essential to the suppression of the slave-trade. All he asked was, that they should adopt in Brazil their own precedent of Texas. If they gave up the duty on Brazilian sugar, and then went to Brazil to obtain commercial advantages or additional measures for the prevention of the slave-trade, they would go there with their hands tied, without any concession to make, and without those means of persuading that power which the offer of admitting her produce might afford. He, therefore, recommended the right hon. Gentleman to forbear the reduction of the duty, until he was assured, that it might be done without injury to our own colonies, and until some reciprocal advantage to this country and to humanity was obtained from Brazil. The right hon. Gentleman had given a description—no doubt a just one—of the great advantages this country would derive from her connexion with Brazil. He had described the extensive

line of coast of that empire, her flowing rivers, her increasing population, and the great demand which might there be created for British manufactures; but he (Mr. Goulburn) felt some little surprise, that while the right hon. Gentleman had thus enlarged on the peculiar advantages to be derived from the connection with Brazil, he had forgotten that there was a possession of the Crown, not inhabited like Brazil by about 6,000,000 of people, of whom one-half were slaves, but inhabited by a free population, estimated at a hundred million, in a state of great civilisation, possessing rivers, not equal, perhaps, to those of the Brazils, but extending through a country as fertile, and opening avenues to numerous nations with means as ample of making returns for the productions and manufactures of this country. He need not say, that the possession to which he alluded was India. If, then, the right hon. Gentleman thought the connexion with Brazil so important, surely he should have some corresponding feeling for the sugar trade of that great country. He believed, that the people of India would become the best customers for English produce. Already did their consumption of them far exceed that of Brazil, and if this country would take from India her supplies of sugar, India would have indefinite means of disposing, not only of the ordinary, but of the more elaborate manufactures of Great Britain. But the right hon. Gentleman had told them, he was afraid that people would embark their capital too hastily in the sugar trade in India, unless this retarding measure of a reduction of the duty on foreign sugar was brought forward, and it was with that view of checking such speculation, that he now recommended it to the House; but when he felt so strongly for those who were about to invest their capital in India, did it not occur to him that by arresting that course of British capital it might possibly be diverted to the Brazils, or to Cuba, and be employed there in raising sugar, and so become an instrument for promoting that slave-trade which had been denounced by Parliament? He was drawing no imaginary picture, he was stating merely what had already occurred; for if the right hon. Gentleman would refer to the documents which were last year laid on the Table of the House, he would find the commissioners in the Brazils informing

the noble Lord, the foreign Secretary, that at that time British capital was employed in fomenting the slave trade and in cultivating land by means of slaves, newly introduced. Could there be a stronger argument than this for not diverting British capital from the legitimate sugar trade in India to a quarter where it could only be employed, if not in contravention of the law, at least in violation of its acknowledged principle? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh did not consider there was anything in the encouragement of the slave-trade which ought to embarrass the House on this occasion; that he for one did not deem it a question of principle; that his views of national duty were satisfied when this country took upon her to suppress the slave-trade in those possessions which were under her control: that he did not consider there was any question of principle or national duty involved in any attempt, direct or indirect, to prevent the existence of the slave-trade in foreign countries; and that when this country had fulfilled the Emancipation Act, she had done all she was in duty bound to do. Now, he (Mr. Goulburn) was most anxious to enter his protest against that doctrine. It had been the fashion of the other side of the House to say, that Whig Governments had been the foremost in promoting freedom and abolishing the slave-trade; and they had exulted, and very naturally, he thought, in having been the successful promoters in Parliament of the two great measures for the suppression of the slave-trade and the emancipation of the negroes. But, on the other hand, he could not forget, when those merits were claimed for Whig Governments, that there was one that more particularly belonged to that Government with which he had acted. He could not forget that at the treaty of Vienna, where all the powers of Europe were assembled, it was a British negotiator acting under a Conservative Government, who brought all those powers to an unanimous declaration of their determination to make every effort for the suppression of the slave-trade. And he might be permitted to say, though God forbid that he should attempt to disparage hon. Gentlemen opposite for being the instruments of good, that he thought the period would arrive, when the world would do ample justice to the memory of that man, who, by the au-



thority of his country, and his own consummate ability, obtained that declaration. He never would admit, that the obligations which that treaty imposed on this country for the abolition of the slave trade had become extinct or obsolete; nor had any such doctrine ever until this period been held in Parliament. What he would ask had been the course of Parliament with reference to that subject? No sooner had the emancipation of the negroes which is now thought to have cancelled our obligations been carried, than the hon. Baronet the Member for Oxford brought forward a motion for an address to the Crown, calling upon it to use every means in its power for the complete abolition of the slave-trade; and the noble Lord the foreign Secretary had given to the House in the course of those discussions, details of the evils to which a remedy was yet to be applied. The noble Lord, too, depicted not only the horrors of the trade, but the difficulties there were in carrying out the declaration made by the treaty of Vienna. But did they stop there? In the year 1839 an address of the other House to the Crown confirmed and sanctioned by the views of this House on the same subject. And again, by that address, had Parliament called upon the Crown to leave no measure untried for the suppression of that traffic especially in Cuba and Brazil, whose sugar it was now proposed to admit into this country. The noble Lord, on one of those occasions informed us, that his difficulties in enforcing the expressed wishes of Parliament were great, not so much from the want of laws directed against the traffic in slaves as from the want of principle in those by whom they were administered. *Quid prosunt* (he exclaimed) *leges sine moribus*. I would beg to suggest to him that, should the present measure be adopted and should he be again called upon to urge on other nations the withholding encouragement from the slave-trade he may meet with the new discouragement of finding, that that want of principle which defeats law weakens negotiation also. He may be told in reply, that if this country prefers encouraging the slave-trade, to bearing for a limited period, some increase of the price of sugar, it is not reasonable to expect, that other nations should abandon larger interests and make greater sacrifices for a principle which we no longer care to maintain. For these reasons, he felt himself bound, on a con-

sideration of the effect which the measure of the Government would have on the finances of the country, on the interests of the colonies and their commerce, and, above all, on that great question the suppression of the foreign slave-trade to which the honour of Parliament and the country was so distinctly pledged to give his cordial support to the motion of his noble Friend.

Sir George Grey said, that, at the close of the third night of this long-protracted debate, he was happy to have it in his power to congratulate the House upon an important disclosure made by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down. It would be in the recollection of the House, that on the night when his right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced his financial scheme, the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite concurred with him most strongly in stating, that such was the existing deficiency in the revenue of the country, that some decided measures must be taken in order to bring up the revenue so as to meet the expenditure. Hon. Gentlemen on that (the Ministerial) side of the House had been anxiously expecting to hear what was the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite, not only as to the whole financial statement of his right hon. Friend, and the scheme which he had submitted to the House for its approbation, but they had been desirous also to learn, if they objected altogether to the details of that measure, on what principles they did so, and what principles they would themselves propose to be adopted. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for having, at last, after three nights of cautious silence, and a close and careful concealment of what would be the principles upon which the budget of the right hon. Baronet, in whose confidence he must suppose the right hon. Gentleman to be, would be propounded to the House, afforded a full answer to the extremely important question which had been put, in these emphatic words: "I will first let things alone." Such was the satisfactory answer which had been given by the right hon. Gentleman to the country, whose attention had been drawn to this subject during the last six months—ever since that much traduced, but most valuable report had been published, which had been so frequently referred to. He might venture to predict, that this was an answer which would be received by the people, whether Whig, or Radical, or

Tory-Radical, with anything but satisfaction. He was sorry that he could not express any more satisfaction with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, than he had felt at those of other hon. Members who had spoken on that side of the House as to the principles upon which the proposed measure of the Government was to be opposed; for, in his speech, and in those which had been previously delivered, he had been alike unable to discover any distinct answer to the propositions which were raised. The hon. Member for Newark (Mr. Gladstone) had commenced his address to the House by avowing openly, that he did not go there to discuss principles. One would have supposed, that the hon. Member at least would have been prepared to propose some principle by which "the conscience of the State," might have been guided; but the hon. Gentleman said, that this was not a question of principle. He rested the case, in the earlier part of his inconsistent speech, entirely on the anticipated supply from the East and West Indies, during this year. He admitted, that if the supply were to remain as deficient as during the past year, there was nothing in the principles stated by his right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, from which he dissented; but he promised such an increased supply that no political expediency could justify the measure proposed. One would have supposed, that the hon. Member would have adopted the principles of the right hon. Gentleman behind him (Dr. Lushington) who had suffered so much for the part which he had taken; but it turned out, that his object was only to maintain a high principle of morality when sugar was 57s., but that, changing with every statement contained in the price currents, of Liverpool or London, it was to vanish with political expediency when sugar was lowered to 27s. On that side of the House he had not the same complaint to make. It had been the misfortune of the Government, on this occasion, to be deserted by some hon. Gentlemen, who had hitherto given their steady and firm support to the principles upon which they had conducted the affairs of this country. The principles upon which that change of position of those hon. Gentlemen had been produced, had, however, been fully and clearly stated, and he asked hon. Gentlemen opposite which of the principles stated by those hon. Gen-

tlemen they adopted. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire, who had spoken on the first night of this debate, had addressed the House with a manliness and candour which had always characterised his proceedings in that House. He had said, that he could not view this as an isolated proposition. He objected to an interference with any monopoly, because, he said, that if they touched one, they must attack all, and the result must be the downfall of the whole system. He defended this as an out-work, because he conceived, that if it were carried, the next attack would be upon the Corn-laws, but he resisted the adoption of the general principle on one case, and declared, that he would do so in all instances. He begged to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite, whether this was the view which they supported. Short and important as the proposition was, they had been silent upon the question of the Corn-laws, and he asked them whether that was not at the bottom of their whole opposition to this sugar question, and whether the House would see the same regard for the negroes and the interests of humanity, if they did not believe, that this was an out-work which must be maintained secure, in order to secure the safety of the Corn-laws. The second principle which had been enunciated by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, had been stated with as much distinctness as that put forward by the hon. Member for Lincolnshire. He said, that he should object to the introduction of sugar which was the produce of slave-labour, and he would rather sacrifice the interests of England, than give encouragement to slave-grown produce and the slave-trade. He asked whether that was the principle upon which hon. Gentlemen opposite would act. [Lord Sandon: Hear!] The noble Lord said, that it was; would the right hon. Baronet also act upon the same principle? He thought, that, at all events, it would be a little satisfactory that the country should know, that the noble Lord who was put forward by the right hon. Baronet upon this occasion, entertained this feeling. The noble Lord, speaking of the change of sentiments of some Members of the Government party, said he was prepared to tell the people of England, that be the price of sugar however extravagant, even beyond the extent of the morality of the hon. Member for

Newark, his principles would never yield, and he could never submit to the introduction of sugar produced by slave-labour. But he must say, that this extreme horror of slavery, coming, as it did, with a very good grace from the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, came with a very bad grace from many of those hon. Members who had come forward to support his views. A petition had been presented by the right hon. Baronet opposite, which implored the House not to sanction the principle of slavery, thinking, by that means to excite the warm and generous feelings of the people of this country, the full value of which they knew well, from the very munificent gifts showered on themselves; and, therefore, availing themselves of these feelings, they came forward now, and placing the interests of the negro strongly before the world, sought by that means to hold this House up to the public reprobation for adopting a measure which they alleged might have the effect of increasing the powers of slavery and the slave-trade. He asked, was it possible for the noble Lord (Lord Sandon), and the right hon. Baronet to adhere to the principle which was now put forward; or was it to be confined to the particular case upon which it had been advanced? If the principle were maintained generally how, he asked, was it possible not to extend it to every article which was the produce of slave-labour? The necessity, if it referred to one instance, referred to all. Great Britain, however, was in communication with nearly every country in the universe, and her commerce was extended into the most remote quarters. She had abolished slavery, but having done so, did the noble Lord and the hon. Member for Lincolnshire say, that she was not to look to the wants of her people, but that she was to compel them to undergo a permanent sacrifice by waging war, for a prohibition must be required against all slave-produce. A distinction had been drawn by hon. Gentlemen between cotton and coffee, on the ground that there was a great difference between the amount and description of labour bestowed on them, but that was not a distinction which the people of England would appreciate. They would inquire into all the horrors of slavery, it was not to the details of the system they objected, but to its principles, and be the slavery comparatively severe or mild in its nature,

it was against slavery itself they desired to contend. [*Cheers.*] The noble Lord cheered this proposition, and he thought, that he had now made him a convert to his views, that the distinction between cotton and sugar did not in reality exist. But it was said, that in this measure the Government had abandoned the principle of opposition to the slave-trade; by this suggestion, one would be led to believe, that these prohibitory duties had been originally imposed on sugar to prevent the introduction of sugar, the produce of slavery. No one, however, knew better than the hon. Member for Newark, that these duties had been imposed long before the slave-trade was abolished, and that, in fact, their real object had been to give protection to slave-grown sugar. It was not for a long time, that the voice of the East-Indians, which had been raised against those duties, have been heard, and it was only in the year 1836, that the duties were equalized; and in the present year this system was carried out. There was nothing in the existing duties, or in the principle of them intended to operate against slavery or the slave-trade, and it was, therefore, for hon. Members to say, that in this proposal they were abandoning those principles upon which they had acted in procuring the extinguishment of this dreadful system. But if the House proceeded upon the principle proposed by the noble Viscount (Viscount Sandon), they must revise the whole of our commercial tariff, not in the sense in which it was now asked for by the great body of the people of this country, but with a view to exclude from our consumption every article which was the produce of slave-labour, however necessary it might be. He must say, that this was a principle which, considered with reference to this great commercial country, was of the greatest possible absurdity, and he was sure, that the House would not sacrifice all our commercial interest, by its recognition. But if they adopted the principle in one case, they must do so in all; and they would be cautious, therefore, how they took a step which was fraught with consequences of such deep importance. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Goulburn) had called the attention of the House to the fact that English capital was employed in Cuba in the maintenance of slave-labour, and in the cultivation of sugar by such means. Undoubtedly, this was a practice which reflected the greatest dis-

grace on those who were parties to it, and he agreed that every means should be taken to prevent it; but he asked those who came to protect free-labour sugar against slave-labour sugar, whether slaves were employed in Cuba only? Were there no mines in the Brazils? He saw the hon. Member for Antrim (Mr. Irving) in his place, and he found it stated in a public document, that a company, of which he was the chairman, had been formed for the purpose of working mines in the Brazils. The capital employed for that purpose was English, but the bones and sinews, by means of which the one was extracted, were the bones and sinews of African slaves. But in connection with the same subject which had been frequently adverted to already in the course of this discussion, the right hon. Gentleman who had last spoken had alluded to a committee on East-India trade, of which he (Sir G. Grey) was a member last year, and to the business of which he had paid particular attention, and he well remembered an important witness, who had been called forward on behalf of the West-Indian interest, in order to oppose the introduction of the East-India rum into this country, and that he was examined at great length by the hon. Member for Antrim, with a view to show the condition of the labourers there. He alluded to Mr. M'Queen, who spoke as the organ of the West-Indian interest, and could not, therefore, be supposed to say anything prejudicial to its interests, but he was bound to say, that he had given his evidence with the most perfect good faith, and in such a manner as to excite his perfect confidence in what he had said. He was asked:—

"Can you give the committee any information about the importation of colonial produce into this country from the West Indies and the Mauritius, and also the consumption thereof in Great Britain and Ireland, and the re-exportation of British sugar, refined or raw, to other countries?—Yes, I can, I have those returns here. In 1839, the whole quantity of sugar imported into Great Britain from the West Indies and the Mauritius was 3,435,257 cwt.; from British India, 519,126 cwt., making altogether 3,954,383 cwt. The consumption of this country last year, deducting the quantity exported, refined and raw, was 3,834,847 cwt., leaving an apparent surplus of 119,536 cwt., but from which remains to be deducted 10,470 cwt. exported in a raw state, and 22,000 cwt. in a refined state, making together 32,470 cwt., leav-

ing a surplus of 87,066 cwt. The drawbacks upon British refined sugar, I have here. The drawback in 1835 amounted to 709,410*l.*; in 1838 to 578,968*l.*; in 1839, to only 26,379*l.* The value of refined sugar exported from this country altogether was, in 1834, 915,693*l.*; in 1835, it was 852,487*l.*; in 1838, it was 553,247*l.*; and in 1839, 213,788*l.*, nearly all of which was foreign sugar refined in bond. From what countries did that chiefly come; was it from countries having slaves?—I believe almost exclusively from Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Brazils; probably there are some sugars that are refined from Manilla and Siam but I apprehend that the price and quality of Brazil, Cuba, and Porto Rico sugar is so superior that the refiners use those in preference; the consequence of which is that the whole of our foreign possessions, and every colony in the West Indies, the Cape of Good Hope, Australia, the East Indies, in fact every part to which we export refined sugar, is at this moment consuming the produce of slave-colonies."

With regard now to the protection of sugar the produce of free labour, it was to be observed, that the hon. Member for Newark spoke no longer in the character of a West Indian, the greater part of the interest which he or his connections had possessed, having been transferred to the East Indies, but the right hon. Gentleman who had spoken last, did not now tell the House, as it had been told before, that the West Indies were in the state of decay and ruin referred to by Mr. M'Queen, but he sought to prove, that the supply to be expected from the West and the East Indies together would be sufficient to meet the demand and to render this measure unnecessary. At all events, however, the measure could do no harm. The hon. Member for Stamford seemed surprised at this suggestion; but he would show him how it was that no harm could be done. Supposing the fact to be contrary to the statement of Mr. M'Queen—that the West Indies were in such a condition, that we might look to it for not decreasing crops, and in which it might be possible to place the land in an improved state of cultivation, his right hon. Friend only proposed to take an adequate security for the fulfilment of those expectations which were held out; that if there should be a deficiency of supply the foreign producers of the commodity might come in aid, so that the consumer should not be subject to those difficulties which he had undergone during the past year. It might be said,

that the protecting duties were insufficient in amount, but if that were the only point, if hon. Gentlemen opposite thought, that notwithstanding the amount of duty proposed, the foreign grower would still be able to undersell the English merchant, that was a question which was to be considered in committee, and the determination of which was delayed and prevented by the motion of the noble Lord, and by this discussion. Looking at the evidence produced before the committee of the extreme fertility, and the immense productive powers, of the vast valley of the Ganges, coupled with all those other advantages connected with the production of sugar in the East Indies, and its importation into this country, he was at a loss to understand why the supply from that quarter had been so limited. He could conceive, that the publication of that evidence would induce capitalists to send their capital to that district, and therefore it was, that he might anticipate that a very large supply would, in future, be derived from thence. He wished to say a word or two as to the question introduced in the latter part of the resolution of the noble Lord. He meant that course which Parliament was called upon to take with regard to foreign sugars. Undoubtedly, England had set a noble example to the world, in determining to procure the abolition of slavery, at the vast expense which it had ceased; but when the cost was estimated at twenty millions only, it was estimated at a sum far lower than in reality had been incurred. The nominal charge, it was true, was only twenty millions, but that amount had been increased by the extra amount of ten millions paid by the consumers of sugar, in the increased price of that commodity. But were our foreign neighbours likely to be induced to follow our example by hon. Gentlemen proclaiming to them that the experiment had been a "miserable failure." Hon. Gentlemen opposite had said so, but he said, that the strongest evidence of its failure would be their proclaiming to the world, that after the sacrifice which had been made, the people of this country were still to be called upon to consent to a permanent sacrifice for the next ten years of another ten millions, the increased amount which they would have to pay for their sugar during that period. The argument was, that the government were proclaiming the failure of the scheme by the present pro-

position, but it was not the Government who proclaimed this to the world, but hon. Gentlemen opposite, when they said, that it was impossible to do good with a moderate protecting duty. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had not adverted to the main principles involved in the propositions of her Majesty's Government, on the contrary, they had expressly declined to do so. The hon. Member for Newark (Mr. Gladstone) said, he did not come down there to discuss principles; and the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the University of Oxford, stated, that he would not enter into a general and desultory discussion, such as had been introduced by the hon. Member for Halifax. That might be a prudent course for hon. Gentlemen opposite, but he believed the country would think differently. The country would duly appreciate their unwillingness to grapple with the principles laid down by her Majesty's Government, to the discussion of which, hon. Gentlemen opposite had been fully and fairly invited. They might look to anticipated triumph; but he firmly believed with his hon. Friend the Member for Halifax, that the more this question was discussed, the better it would be understood. And whatever pretext or guise hon. Gentlemen opposite might assume for the purpose of enlisting the sympathy and the feelings of the reflecting portion of the people, the better they were understood, the more certain would be the triumph of the principles submitted to the House and the country by her Majesty's Government.

Viscount Sandon was understood to complain in explanation that the right hon. Baronet, had attributed to him sentiments which he entirely disowned. The right hon. Gentleman had interpreted his cheers, as if he had agreed in the right hon. Gentleman's exposition of the sentiments of the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, which was not the case.

Mr. Goulburn also explained. The right hon. Gentleman had imputed to him that he had stated, that in the present crisis of affairs it was necessary that nothing should be done. What he stated, was, that they were in a crisis which demanded great exertion, but the additional revenue that would be derived from sugar under the circumstances of the quantity announced by the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to be

in the course of arrival from the East and West Indies would be sufficient, and he had said, that that revenue would be obtained by their doing nothing.

Sir George Grey was understood to say amidst much noise, that he had certainly not meant to do any injustice either to his noble Friend or the right hon. Gentleman, and he believed, that he had correctly represented their cheers and their opinions, though if they disavowed his interpretation he must accept their disavowal.

Mr. Irving said, that no person who addressed that House more rarely addressed the House than he did. It was not his intention to have said a word on this subject, had it not been for the rather unnecessary attack made upon him by the right hon. Baronet, the Judge Advocate. He could not understand upon what principle it was, that the Judge Advocate had singled him out from among all the other persons similarly situated. And, above all, why he should have singled him out to justify the opinions, in answer to questions before a committee expressed by the witness, to whom the right hon. Baronet had alluded, Mr. M'Queen. He wished the evidence of that gentleman had been read by every Member of that House. That evidence gave a true and just account of what the West-Indies had been and what they were likely to become, and if any man had any regard for the rights of property, if any man had any regard for the changes which the slave population was likely to undergo in those colonies in the event of such measures as those contemplated by her Majesty's Government being carried into effect, he was sure such a man must hesitate before he could allow such measures to pass that House. This question had not been argued upon proper principles. It was assumed that they were to give admission to foreign sugars wheresoever they came from, whether from the Brazils, from Cuba, from Manilla, or from the eastern islands: but he would say, that if they permitted such sugars to come into their markets at any duty he cared not what—[*Great laughter.*] He did not see that there was anything very risible in what he said. He would repeat the observation, and say, that if they allowed these sugars to come into their markets at any duty whatever, they would accumulate so much misery and distress on the West-Indies, that it would

be impossible for the West-Indies, circumstanced as they were, to continue the cultivation of sugar; and, as was distinctly stated by Mr. M'Queen, our West-India colonies would become what St. Domingo was, a scene of utter desolation, from which sugar cultivation would be entirely excluded. This question had not been reasoned upon according to true principles. He could tell them that the East-Indies, with the disadvantages under which they would labour if this measure were to take effect, and with the expense of their government, would not cultivate sugar at all, and there was nothing else by which the proprietors of the soil could make a profit. But what effect would this measure have upon the trade of this country? It would ruin our trade with the West-Indies, to which place it was proved, that we exported more of our commodities than to the Brazils. They might talk of the twenty millions granted for the emancipation of the negroes, but was it not proved, that the real amount of loss sustained by the West-India proprietors was 137 millions? If this measure were to pass—if they were by such measures as this to ruin the West-Indies, instead of twenty millions they ought to pay them 140 millions. There was another part of the remarks of the right hon. Baronet, which he did not mean to pass over. The right hon. Baronet had accused him with being connected with a mine in the Brazils. It was perfectly true. There was a great number of persons similarly situated. It was perfectly true, that there was a great number of that sect, which was as much opposed to the system of slavery, wherever it existed, as any persons who were concerned in mines precisely the same as he was. That connection was formed at a period when public companies were instituted for the purpose of mining, not only in the Brazils, but in Mexico, and in every other part of South America, and he had no doubt he was addressing many individuals—yes, he had no doubt he was addressing many individuals in that House, who were as much concerned in those mines as he was. He wished them joy of the concern. He hoped they would be more successful than he was in that with which he was concerned. He would give the right hon. Baronet all his concerns. He assured the right hon. Baronet that he should have them upon good terms, and at a cheap rate. He was not

quite sure that the right hon. Baronet was a lover of speculation, but he would not give the right hon. Baronet his mines for nothing. He hoped his hon. Friends were satisfied. The right hon. Baronet had said, that he Mr. Irving had squeezed blood out of the negro race; but, if he had, he could tell the right hon. Baronet that he had squeezed no gold. He should be very glad if the right hon. Baronet could do so, and the more so as he was sure that if the right hon. Baronet felt it to be a good speculation, he would have no objection to place himself in his shoes. Had the right hon. Baronet any other accusation to bring against him? He was not in the habit of thrusting himself upon that House, but the House must perceive that he was on the present occasion compelled to obtrude himself on their attention.

Debate again adjourned.

VICTORIA PARK.] On the motion of Mr. E. J. Stanley, the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of establishing a park at the east end of the metropolis, to be called the Victoria Park,

Mr. E. J. Stanley said, he had to move a resolution to the effect that a sum, the produce of the sale of York House, with the interest accruing thereon, now vested in Exchequer bills, should be expended in the purchase of a royal park, to be laid out for the accommodation of the public in the neighbourhood of Spitalfields. The particular site fixed upon was that piece of land called Bonner's-fields, containing 290 acres. With the exception of a small portion of this land, which was to be reserved for the purpose of building villas, the whole was to be thrown open to the public. This piece of ground was situated in the immediate neighbourhood of the populous district of Bethnal-green, and he had no doubt, considering the immense benefit that would be conferred on the population of the whole of the eastern part of the metropolis, the House would not hesitate to sanction the Commissioners of Woods and Forests in carrying out the resolution he had announced. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving that her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests be authorised to complete the contract for the sale and disposal of the Exchequer bills raised by the sale of York House, and to apply the proceeds towards providing a royal park near Bonner's-fields and Old Ford-lane, to be opened

for the accommodation of the people of the eastern part of the metropolis.

Sir R. Peel begged to know what was the estimated value of the proposed park?

Mr. Stanley said, 100,000*l.*, to meet which there was a sum of 72,000*l.*, the produce of the sale of York House, which, having been invested in Exchequer bills, amounted now, with the interest, to 100,000*l.* He believed that sum would be sufficient to cover the whole of the expenses.

Mr. Kemble said, that however right and proper the proposition might be, he thought at that Hour, twenty-five minutes past twelve o'clock, it was rather late to consent to so large an expenditure.

Mr. Stanley merely moved the resolution for the purpose of founding a bill upon it, which might become matter of discussion at a future period. The proposed park was projected entirely with the object advocated by the hon. Member who had just sat down, namely for the recreation of the lower classes. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member for East Surrey would not oppose the vote on the present occasion, as he would have ample opportunity of objecting to the measure which was to be founded upon it.

Resolution agreed to, the House resumed. Resolution to be reported. Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, May 12, 1841.

MINUTES.] NEW MEMBER.—Mr. H. Lindsey, for Sandwich.

Bills. Read a first time:—Victoria Park.—Read a second time:—Court Houses (Ireland).—Read a third time:—Excise Collection and Management.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Lister, Mr. James, Mr. Baines, Sir C. Style, Mr. Clay, Mr. W. Turner, and other hon. Members, from Worsley, Bradford, Cumberland, Leeds, Scarborough, Norwich, Manchester, Lancashire, and many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir J. Y. Buller, Sir T. Acland, Mr. R. Clive, Mr. Miles, and other hon. Members, from Devon, Yeovil, and various other places, for Church Extension.—By Mr. Ainsworth, from the Proprietors of Vauxhall and Waterloo Bridges, for the House to take measures for Opening those Bridges to the Public.—By Mr. T. Duncombe, from Leicester, for the Liberation of Mr. O'Connor.—By Mr. Muntz, from the Congregation of Ebenezer Chapel, Birmingham, against Church Rates, and against any grant of Public Money for the Extension of the Church Establishment.—By Sir C. Burrell, Mr. Waddington, and Mr. Henniker, from various places in Sussex, Suffolk, and Surrey, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Ellice, Mr. Wood, Mr. Ward, Mr. Thornely, and other hon. Members, from Carlisle, Kendal, Sheffield, Leeds, Liverpool, Bodmin, and other places, in favour of the Government measure for the Alteration of the Tariff.

SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS—  
ADJOURNED DEBATE (FOURTH DAY.)  
The Adjourned Debate resumed.

Mr. *Cholmondeley*: In rising to offer a few remarks upon the important subject now under consideration, I can assure the House, that it is not my intention to trespass upon their patience for any length of time, or to enter into any of those commercial details, which have been already so fully and so well stated by those most conversant with the subject, but there is one point to which I could wish to draw the attention of the House, namely, that there has been a most unjust imputation thrown upon the West-India proprietors, and upon hon. Members on this side of the House, of being influenced in their opposition to this measure, solely by a wish to preserve their own monopoly, and to deprive the poorer classes of this country of the blessing of cheap sugar, which this measure of her Majesty's Government professes to extend to them, at the same time that it augments the revenue. To be sure, these great advantages are not to be obtained without some slight sacrifice, it is confessed even by those who introduce this measure, that it must, in some degree, affect the West Indian interests, and it is even admitted, that it may incidentally give some encouragement to the slave-trade, but what are these minor evils when compared with the immense good, that it is to effect. Now, Sir, I think it is a bad maxim, "to do a great good, do a little ill," but when the adage is reversed, and it is proposed "to do a little good, do a great ill." I think, there is nobody that will not agree with me, as to the badness of the maxim, and this is, I think, precisely the proposition that is made by her Majesty's Government, with the sole exception, that, I think, the good, small as it is, is most problematical. What is the ground taken by hon. Members opposite? We are told not to waste our sympathies upon the negroes, but to turn our compassion to our own suffering artisans at home, and the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, has drawn an affecting picture of the poor man obliged to turn away from the shop, because his scanty means were insufficient to purchase the slight luxury of sugar, possibly for a sick wife or child. God forbid, that I, or any Member of this House, should view with indifference the sufferings or privations of the poor, or treat with levity any proposition to alleviate those sufferings, or remove those privations; but, in this case,

what is the amount of relief to be administered? By the noble Lord's own calculations, the utmost he expects is a reduction in the price of sugar of 1s. 6d. per cwt., or as was so well and clearly shown by the noble Lord, the Member for South Lancashire, a diminution per pound so small as not be measured by the smallest denomination of coin current in the realm. Can any hon. Member so far deceive himself as to fancy, that any great advantage can accrue to the poor man from this infinitesimal reduction. The only class, that would derive benefit from it was that which might be regarded as the intermediate class between the great importer and the poor consumer—he meant the retail trader; but as far as the poor man was concerned, it would only prove to be a second edition of the measure for taking the tax off leather, in which case, the retail dealer alone was benefited, and the poor man complained that he could get his shoes no cheaper. He had no objection to confer a benefit upon the retail trader, but not at the price at which it was proposed to be purchased. The twofold object of the measure was to afford a very small complement of relief to a very small section of the community, and to raise the sum of 700,000*l.* for the purposes of revenue, by means of which the House knew nothing, of the possibility of which there was no proof, no attempt at proof even, and for which they had nothing but assertion. To effect these two objects, the House was called upon to inflict a measure little short of ruin, upon the great West-India proprietors and sugar merchants, and to render nugatory the payment by this country of 20,000,000*l.* For such a boon, he certainly was not prepared to make so great a sacrifice. The noble Lord, in his speech on Friday, has stated, that the amendment of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, was "the most factious step, that could be resorted to," and has characterised it as "merely a party movement, brought forward to serve party purposes." Now, Sir, there never was a more unfounded accusation, or one, he really believed, which might be more justly retorted upon those who made it. When these debates, and those who have taken a part in them, shall have passed away, when all angry and contentious feelings shall have been long since laid at rest, and these eventful days have become matter of history, what would be the opinion of an unprejudiced observer, upon reviewing these



transactions; to which of the great parties in that House would he apply the term "faction," and on which would he cast the imputation of having acted merely for party purposes? On one side, he would observe the Government of the country, placed in a situation of very considerable difficulty, at a critical juncture, having lately sustained a most signal defeat upon a most important measure, with a large majority of the House of Lords against them, with the feelings of the country (if they might judge from the results of recent elections), not very much in their favour—on the one side, he would see this Government hastily, and without notice, bringing forward three great measures, striking at and involving three of the largest interests in the empire; he would see them at once striking a triple blow at those interests—at the West-Indian interests, by an alteration of the sugar duties; at the Canadian interests, by a reduction of the timber duties; and though last not least, at the landed and agricultural interest, by the foolish theory of a fixed duty upon corn, which would vanish the very first year of a scarcity. On the opposite side, he would observe a body of men condemning these sweeping measures as precipitate, injurious, and as likely to produce more of evil than of good, and endeavouring to prevent the state from being shaken to its centre by the rash hand of an over-hasty innovation. Upon these grounds—objecting to the proposition of the noble Lord, as nearly ruinous to the West-India proprietors—as unnecessarily affording encouragement to the slave-trade, and as one of these three measures which, taken together, must inevitably damage our national prosperity, he would give it his most strenuous opposition; while he should cordially support the resolution of his noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool.

Viscount *Howick*: Sir, though this debate has already been protracted to so great a length, I hope that, in consideration of the interest I have long taken in the abolition of slavery, the House will excuse me if I am unwilling to give a silent vote in favor of a measure, which the hon. Gentleman, who has just sat down, like others who have preceded him, has asserted to have a direct tendency to encourage both slavery and the slave-trade. In reference to this objection, which has been urged against the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government, I must in the first place observe, that no hon.

Gentleman, as far as I remember, has contended that the introduction into this country of produce raised by slave labour, ought not, under any circumstances, to be permitted. It is not asserted that, as in private life, a man who knowingly receives stolen goods, is justly considered an accomplice in the crime he thus encourages; so in the intercourse of nations, a country that consents to receive from another what is known to be the produce of slave labour, ought to be regarded as sharing in the crime of maintaining slavery. No hon. Gentleman has ventured to push the argument to this extent. If they had done so, if it could have been shown that a great fundamental principle of justice was involved in the question, and that to receive the produce of slave labour, was to violate the eternal rules of right and justice; in that case the decision to which the House ought to come would be clear; there would be no room for considering the consequences of the course we should be bound to take; but whatever the sacrifice, we must do what justice required; but we must also, if this should be our view of the subject, proceed much further, and we must uniformly and in every case exclude the produce of slave labour of all descriptions. But as this is not maintained to be our duty, as the argument on the other side only goes to this, that the abolition of slavery and the slave trade having long been one of the great objects of the policy of this country, we ought not to adopt a measure of which the tendency is to encourage slavery; as this is the ground which is taken, though no one more heartily than myself concurs in thinking it ought to be our policy, by every means in our power, to discourage slavery; still I am at full liberty to exercise my judgment as to whether the tendency of the measure is that imputed to it, and whether, by adopting the measure of Her Majesty's Government, we should really give encouragement to the slave-trade, and promote the permanent continuance of slavery in the manner which has been asserted. Now, Sir, upon this point I am directly at issue with my right hon. and learned Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets. His argument, if I rightly understand it, is, that if sugar produced by slave-labour should be allowed to come into consumption in this the richest country in the world, the price of sugar would necessarily be raised, and its pro-

duction in Cuba and the Brazils, where it is carried on by slaves and the slave-trade, would be encouraged; wherefore, my right hon. and learned Friend, contends, that such sugar should continue to be excluded, by a prohibitory duty, from our market. This argument is plausible, but it appears to me to be entirely unsound; and the policy recommended by my right hon. and learned Friend is, I think, erroneous. The argument, and the policy founded upon it, both proceed upon the assumption, that it is in vain to suppose that sugar can possibly be raised by free labour in our own dominions, so as to compete with the slave produce of Cuba and Brazil; and that, therefore, we must be content to exclude this produce from our own market, yielding up to it, without a struggle, the market of Europe, and of the world. If this assumption of my right hon. and learned Friend is correct, I must say it is a most mortifying conclusion to come to, a conclusion which I would not admit without the clearest evidence, and then certainly with the greatest pain and reluctance. But I totally deny that the assumption of my right hon. and learned Friend can be supported, either by reasoning or by experience. I remember well during the many debates upon the abolition of slavery, that my right hon. and learned Friend, and another hon. Friend of ours, no longer, unfortunately, a Member of this House, who took so distinguished and honourable a lead in the struggle for the abolition of slavery, I mean, of course, Sir Thomas F. Buxton; I say I remember well often to have listened to them when they were endeavouring to prove, by reasoning and by facts, that slavery was not only a crime but a mistake, and that the forced labour of the slave was not merely exacted by cruelty and injustice, but, in the end, the dearest and least productive labour that could be employed. That free labour, with fair play, and proper measures adapted to direct and stimulate it, would always be more than a match in open competition for the labour of slaves. My right hon. and learned Friend may now believe, that in using these arguments he was mistaken—he may now think that he was at that time in error—he may have changed his views upon the subject, and believe that free labour cannot successfully compete with slave labour; but if my right hon. and learned Friend has changed his

opinion, I have not altered mine; on the contrary, the results already produced, by the great experiment which has been tried by the emancipation of the negro population of our colonies (mismanaged as in many respects I think this experiment to have been), seem to me to give no ground whatever for despairing that our own colonies, with free labour, may maintain a successful competition in the cultivation of sugar with those countries in which slavery is still maintained. But they will be little likely to do so if we teach them to lean upon the broken reed of protection and monopoly. A trade bolstered up by restrictions, and prohibitory duties, all experience teaches us, never attains a healthy and vigorous growth, while the removal of restrictions, and of what is misnamed protection, has often the best effect in giving strength and activity to a trade before languid and depressed. My noble Friend, the Secretary for the Colonies, has already alluded to a striking example of this in the extension and improvement of the silk trade, in consequence of the measures of Mr. Huskisson; and I see no reason whatever for believing that a similar result might not follow from similar measures with respect to the growth of sugar. What is there to prevent our West Indian colonies from carrying on this branch of industry with success? The fertility of Cuba and Brazil has been dwelt on, but in this respect they certainly have no superiority over some of our own colonies, for instance, Demerara and Trinidad. I believe that in no part of the world is there to be found a soil more productive than that which they possess; and even as regards our older colonies, I believe that it is not so much that they are deficient in natural fertility, as that the soil has been exhausted by the miserable system of cultivation which invariably prevails where slavery exists. Is there then more capital, greater intelligence, more enterprise and skill amongst the planters of Cuba and Brazil than amongst those of British race? This will hardly be asserted. What then is the difficulty? We are told that the great disadvantage under which the British colonies suffer, is that of the deficiency of labour. I do not deny that such a deficiency exists, but I must attribute it, in a great degree, to the mistaken measures which have been adopted in carrying into effect the abolition of slavery, partly by

this country, but chiefly by the local authorities. The measures adopted since 1833 have been rather attempts to coerce than to induce the population to labour, and the fiscal regulations enacted in the colonies have been ill calculated to promote regular and continuous industry. There has been nothing like the adoption of measures founded on an enlarged and deliberate consideration of the altered circumstances of the colonies, with the view of securing an adequate supply of labour, and calling forth the energies of the population. The colonists have shown a reluctance to adapt the modes of cultivation and the treatment of their labourers to the altered condition of society, in consequence of the measure of 1833. Now, Sir, one great advantage which I anticipate from the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government, is, that by the stimulus of competition, it will enforce in the colonies more vigorous and better directed efforts to remove the difficulties which are now felt. It will compel all parties there, from the local legislatures down to the managers of estates, and the labourers themselves, to make greater exertions to meet the competition which they will have to encounter. I am persuaded the result will prove that the production of sugar may be successfully carried on in the West Indies; but when I say this, I do not mean to assert that it will be possible to carry it on in the manner which has heretofore prevailed, and so as to yield a profit to proprietors resident in this country, who cultivate sugar by means of hired agents in the colonies. I do not believe that, except by the closest monopoly, and by keeping up prices far beyond their reasonable rate, so unnatural a system as this can be made to yield a profit. Let me ask, hon. Gentlemen, what would be the result of a similar system in this country. I believe, Sir, that the owners of landed estates in this country do not often find that keeping their land in their own hands is a profitable speculation. You, Sir, may be an exception to the rule, owing to your great knowledge and skill in agriculture, but, in general, I think it will be admitted that the farming of gentlemen, however it may answer as an amusement, seldom does so in the way of profit, and this even when gentlemen are resident upon their estates, and can themselves superintend their cultivation. But, Sir, if an English landed proprietor

were to reside in Jamaica, being as ignorant of the practical cultivation of estates in this country, as the majority of West Indian proprietors are of the details of sugar cultivation, and if he were then to attempt to keep a farm of the best land of England in his own hands, and to cultivate it by hired agents, does any man suppose that any profit could be thus obtained? But the production of sugar involves not merely farming, but a manufacturing process, in which, as in every manufacture, the profit depends upon the economy with which all the details are managed, and upon the skill with which the process is carried on, and I ask any of the Gentlemen in the House, acquainted with our own manufactures, whether a large manufactory can possibly be successfully conducted by any person but the owner; and whether, if the owner of such an establishment were to endeavour to carry on his business by means of agents, while he himself resided at the distance of two or three thousand miles, anything but ruin could follow from the attempt? I do not, therefore, expect that, if we admit the competition of foreign sugar, non-resident proprietors in our colonies will be able to derive a profit from the cultivation of their estates on their own account; but far from regarding this as an objection to the measure of her Majesty's Government, I consider it as one of its chief advantages. I believe that new arrangements will soon be effected, that the owners of colonial estates, instead of keeping them in their own hands, will let them to tenants, as farms are let in this country. In many cases, I have no doubt, the negroes themselves will undertake to cultivate, for their own benefit, the estates upon which they formerly laboured as slaves; already more than one instance has occurred in Demerara, of negroes joining together and purchasing estates at very high prices, with a view to the production of sugar. My noble Friend the other evening informed us that in Jamaica, also, the negroes were rapidly acquiring wealth; and he stated the number of those who had purchased cottages or land from their savings. As they thus accumulate property, they will be enabled to become the tenants of their former masters; and, in the same manner, the white inhabitants of the islands—those who have heretofore been book-keepers, overseers, and attornies—will find it advantageous to undertake the cultivation of

sugar on their own account, instead of as the deputies and agents of others; already, if I am not misinformed, this change has taken place in some cases, and it will rapidly become general, if the competition of foreign sugar is allowed. As this altered system comes into action, I am persuaded that the cost of producing sugar in the British West Indies, will be reduced to a degree of which it would be difficult now to form a conception. Those who are acting on their own account can venture to make improvements, and engage in undertakings, which the mere agents of distant proprietors either do not think of, or cannot run the risk of attempting with the responsibility that rests upon them, and with the uncertainty whether their employers may approve of the immediate outlay which the adoption of their plans may require. But the energy and enterprise of men acting for their own benefit, will speedily lead to the adoption of various means for saving labour, and to improvements in the rotation of crops, and in the various processes of cultivation and manufacture, by which the soil will be rendered more productive, and the preparation of the produce for exportation more economical. At present it is notorious that any attempts at such improvements which have been made are still in their infancy; while slavery continued they were almost impracticable; the mode of cultivation which prevailed was the rudest and most barbarous to be found in the civilized world, and was carried on to a great extent by the mere application of brute force. Such continues to be the case in Cuba and Brazil, and it must continue while the accursed system of slavery is maintained; and I cannot for a moment believe that sugar thus produced, will be long able to compete with that which will be produced in our own colonies by free labour, under the guidance of men animated and stimulated by the feeling that they are acting for themselves, and that they are to reap the fruits of their own enterprise and activity. If we turn to the East Indies, we shall there find no deficiency either of labour, or of fertility in the soil; on the contrary, the soil is most productive, and labour cheaper perhaps than it is elsewhere to be found. Nothing is wanting for the production of sugar but British capital and intelligence, and the removal of fiscal obstructions to enterprise and industry.

British capital and intelligence have already been directed to this quarter, and the first deficiency will soon be supplied. With respect to the remaining difficulty, here again the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government will prove of great advantage, as the necessity of maintaining a competition with foreign countries will compel the rulers of India, the British Parliament, and the public, to look into the condition of that country, with a view of removing the obstacles which, I fear, now stand in the way of the extension of its industry, and the full development of its resources. These considerations lead me to believe that both our East and West India possessions will be able to compete in the production of sugar with Cuba and Brazil; but if we can give them any further advantage and assistance in the race of free and honourable competition, it is our duty to do so. My right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, has already, in the course of the present Session, removed some of the restrictions which weighed upon the trade of our colonies; if more remains to be done in the same direction, let him confidently appeal to the House, and I am convinced that he will find it prepared to support any measures for that purpose which he may propose. Much may also be done for our own colonies by increased vigour in our measures for the suppression of the slave trade. I rejoice to see, by papers lately presented to the House, that an example has been set, which, I trust, will be followed. Captain Denman, instead of waiting to capture the slave ships after they have put to sea, has landed the force under his command, and destroyed the depots on shore where slaves were collected for exportation; and he has thus, on one part of the coast, given a blow to this detestable traffic, from which it is not likely speedily to recover. Let the same course be pursued on other parts of the coast of Africa. I think we should be perfectly justified in telling the native chiefs, that they are not to be permitted to carry on the trade. We have, I fear, made war for higher causes and for more questionable objects; and, it seems to me, that we have a perfect right, if these chiefs persist in carrying on this inhuman trade, to land our forces and destroy the slave factories and vessels engaged in the trade which are lying in the rivers. Assisted by these measures, I am convinced

that our own possessions will soon be enabled to undersell the slave-grown sugar of Cuba and Brazil, if the policy of her Majesty's Government is adopted; and I would earnestly entreat the House to consider how much higher, how much more important are the objects of this policy, than those of the timid, I should have said the cowardly policy of my right hon. and learned Friend, if such a word could properly be applied to anything recommended by him. All that my right hon. and learned Friend aims at, is merely to exclude slave grown sugar from our own market, leaving it in undisputed possession of the other markets of the world. What should we thus gain? The hon. Member for Nottingham, (Mr. Walter) told us on a former evening that we had already paid twenty millions for the abolition of slavery, that we had imposed upon the people of this country an annual charge far exceeding the interest of that large sum, in the increased price of sugar, and that we had expended immense sums of money and many lives in our attempts to put down the slave trade on the coast of Africa, and that, after all, the only result of all our efforts, and all our sacrifices, was that this inhuman trade was carried on more extensively than ever, and with even aggravated cruelty. Such was the statement of that hon. Member (and I fear it is not far from the truth), of the effects produced by the policy we have hitherto pursued. Can there be a stronger reason for changing our policy? That which her Majesty's Government now propose to adopt, aims, on the contrary, at the extirpation, not only of the slave trade, but of slavery; for the first pound of free grown sugar which shall successfully compete in the open market of Europe with the sugars of Cuba and Brazil, will be the certain forerunner of the abolition of slavery in those countries. A system based upon wickedness and injustice is so inherently weak and rotten, that it must soon crumble away of itself, and cannot long contend with one which rests on the solid foundation of justice and humanity. But, Sir, I know the answer which my right hon. and learned Friend will make. He will tell me that he too proposes to do all in his power to encourage the production of sugar by free labour in the British possessions, that he too hopes ultimately to undersell the slave dealer, but that in the meantime, and till this is accomplished, he will exclude slave sugar

from our own market. My right hon. Friend, if this is his view, is, I think, greatly mistaken. I am convinced that to stimulate production in our own dominions, to hasten the period of their being enabled to meet the slave owner on equal terms in foreign markets, we must subject them to competition; no other regulations, no other measures which it is in our power to adopt, will act so powerfully as the sharp spur of necessity in urging our own growers to the exertions by which alone they can produce sugar as cheaply as our rivals. While monopoly exists it is in vain to expect that the inhabitants of our West Indian colonies will make those great changes in long established habits, which the altered state of society has rendered indispensable. In this view I think the course pursued by her Majesty's Government has been a judicious one; they did not attempt to alter the duties upon foreign sugar at the first moment of emancipation, but three years will have elapsed since that measure was fully accomplished, before the proposed new scale of duties can take effect. The disturbance which so great a change in society could not fail, in the first instance, to produce, is gone by, the new order of things is becoming settled, and now, if ever, is the time for preventing another bad system from taking root, now is the time for making a change in our duties, if we would avoid creating new vested interests in monopoly. I say, therefore, that it is wise now to stimulate our own producers by competition, without depriving them of a fair protection, for let the House recollect that the proposition of her Majesty's Government is not (as might be supposed from the speeches of hon. Members opposite) to deprive our own possessions of all protection; on the contrary the high protecting duty of fifty per cent. is still intended to be imposed on foreign sugar, and if this should be not sufficient it may be increased by the House, if we go into the Committee of ways and means. The question now before us is not whether we shall adopt precisely the scale of duties which my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer has recommended, but whether any competition at all between our own possessions and foreign countries shall be allowed, or an entirely prohibitory duty be continued. The hon. Member for Antrim (Mr. Irving) last night candidly told us what were the feelings of those whose interests he represents; he told us "you must not admit competition at all, we

must have an absolutely prohibitory duty," and we are now called upon to decide between prohibition and competition with a fair protection. For the reasons I have endeavoured to state to the House, I believe that by admitting competition we shall produce a more healthy and vigorous action in this branch of industry in our own dominions, and thus promote the final extinction of slavery and the slave trade; but this is more than I am called upon to prove. Unless it can be shown on the other side that the tendency of the measure of her Majesty's Government will clearly be to give increased encouragement to the slave trade, and an encouragement which it is not in our power to counterbalance by the increased vigour of our direct endeavours to suppress it—unless this proposition can be established by our opponents, I contend that the House would not be justified in rejecting a measure which, undoubtedly, would afford very great relief to our own population. I say it would undoubtedly afford great relief to our own population; for though an attempt has been made to deny this, the arguments which have been urged with that view have been so palpably fallacious and unsound, that I cannot believe that they will produce the slightest impression upon the House or upon the country. The hon. Member for Newark (Mr. Gladstone), and the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Cholmondeley), have asserted that a reduction in the price of sugar, of only 1s. 6d. per cwt. is the utmost to be expected from the proposed measure. So small a reduction, it is argued, could not possibly affect the retail trade, and therefore would be of no benefit to the consumer. I will admit to hon. Gentlemen that I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer might safely have carried farther the principle on which he proposes to act. I think upon the whole it would have been more judicious to have made a reduction of 7s. or 8s. per cwt. in the duty on colonial sugar, preserving the same proportion between the duties on foreign and colonial sugar which has been recommended by the Government, and trusting to the increased consumption which would thus have been created for the maintenance of the revenue. This, I say, I am inclined to believe would have been the best mode of dealing with the question, and this scale of duties, if we should go into Committee, it would be in the power of the House to adopt. But taking the measure even as recommended by the Government, I have

no doubt that a very great boon would be afforded to the consumer. The calculations which have been made as to the supply of sugar which we may expect in the present year are quite beside the purpose. It is nothing to tell us that without admitting foreign sugar we shall have a supply of 200,000 tons, and that the annual consumption of the country has never exceeded that amount; I have no means of ascertaining what the consumption might be if we had a cheap and abundant supply, and I can have no doubt that the measure proposed by the Government must have the effect of extending the sources from which our supply is to be drawn. What are the plain facts of the case? We have now a duty on foreign sugar which is absolutely prohibitory, and for this her Majesty's Government proposes to substitute a duty of about 150 per cent. on the value of the article in bond, and exceeding by 50 per cent. the duty upon British sugar. Against even this moderate and cautious admission of foreign produce those interested in the present monopoly are in arms, and the very eagerness with which they defend that monopoly, the very earnestness with which they resist all competition, ought to convince us that the measure would be for the benefit of the public, by reducing the price of sugar. But, Sir, when my noble Friend (Lord J. Russell) the other evening so eloquently described to us the sufferings of the inhabitants of Bolton, when we read the authentic accounts which recent inquiries have placed before us of the low state to which a large proportion of our manufacturing population have been reduced,—when we speak of these things; and argue that to relieve this distress we ought to adopt the measure now under our consideration, do we mean to say that it is merely from the fall in the price of sugar that the benefit we anticipate will arise? Far from it; the advantage of a reduction in the price of sugar is by itself by no means unworthy of consideration, since the hon. Member for the city of London (Mr. Grote) has shown, that upon our present consumption, the reduction of a penny per pound in the price of sugar is equal to a reduction of taxation of 1,600,000*l.* But still this is but a small part of the advantage which we anticipate from the measure. We believe that for the relief of our suffering population we must endeavour to extend the field of employment, that we must strive to open a new career for industry, to make labour more productive,

and that the only mode of doing this, is cautiously but effectually to remove the fetters and restrictions by which our commerce is now bound down and crippled, and to get rid of the impolitic and mischievous obstructions to the freedom of exchange between nation and nation, which our present legislation imposes. It is an essential and necessary part of such an attempt to improve our commercial policy that I regard this measure as most valuable. Amongst all the prohibitory duties which it is proposed to modify, there is none, taken by itself, more important than that upon foreign sugar. Brazil is one of our best customers, and it has been stated by her Majesty's Government, who are charged with the negotiations with that country, that the regulations which it will adopt on the approaching termination of our commercial treaty will mainly depend upon the course which we may adopt with respect to the admission of its sugar. From any general measure for the improvement of our tariff, with a view to the extension of our trade, it would, therefore, be preposterous that the article of sugar should be excluded; and the question now before us is, whether a general and comprehensive revision of our import duties is to be attempted. The proposal we are now considering, forms only part of a larger and more extensive measure for the removal of monopolies, and the modification of excessive protecting duties. It is as such that it is really important, and it is as such that it has been attacked. My hon. Friend, the Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Handley) has stated, with his usual frankness, that he opposes the measure of her Majesty's Government because he feels that if he concurs in diminishing the protection of the West India planter and of the ship-owner, he cannot, consistently, call upon the House to maintain unaltered the present Corn-laws. This is the ground upon which he has honestly and fairly stated that he rests his opposition to an alteration of the sugar duties, and the House and the country will well understand that it is the same feeling which really actuates the majority of those who urge only the plea of humanity, and their horror of the slave-trade. We well understand that these popular topics are taken up by most of those who have used them, merely to hide the ugly and repulsive features of monopoly, the cause they have really to defend. No doubt, Sir, many Gentlemen have been influenced only by

their sincere and honest conviction that the admission of foreign sugar would give encouragement to the slave-trade. No man can doubt that this, and this only, has been the motive of my right hon. and learned Friend who has acted so distinguished a part in all that relates to the abolition of slavery. No doubt, also, the hon. Baronet, the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir R. Inglis), is entitled to the credit of being influenced by the same motives; but I confess it is impossible for me to see without feelings of disgust petitions laid upon the Table of the House calling upon us for the sake of humanity, to maintain the exclusion of foreign sugar, signed by the very same names which I remember were attached to every petition and remonstrance against all the measures adopted for the benefit of our own negro population. When I know what has been the past conduct of these persons—when I know also that the new cloak of philanthropy which they have assumed cannot conceal their strong interest in the existing monopoly—when I put these things together, I cannot admit that the opposition of these petitioners is entitled to the same respect as that of my right hon. and learned Friend (Dr. Lushington). I will not follow the example of the hon. Member for Newark (Mr. Gladstone), in imputing the degrading motives to the opponents of this measure of which he has thought fit to accuse those by whom it has been brought forward and supported. But I must say, considering the position in which that hon. Member stands, it would have been more discreet in him not to have thrown such imputations upon others. He would have done well to remember the old proverb, that those who live in glass houses ought not to be the first to throw stones, and that we could hardly have forgot the part which he took in the debates of 1833, and who at that time was the owner of the Vreeden Hoop estate in Demerara. He should have remembered that even in that colony, where there too generally a high rate of produce for the number of slaves employed, and a high rate of mortality amongst the slaves by whose excessive labour this produce was raised, that even in that colony the Vreeden Hoop estate was remarkable both for the large produce of sugar, and for the rapid diminution in the number of the slaves, a diminution in three years of no less than eighty-one, or one-seventh of the whole number. Sir, I am persuaded

that, notwithstanding all the attempts which have been made to represent this as a question of humanity, and of whether the slave-trade is to be encouraged, it will be understood by the country that the point really at issue is, whether an alliance of all those interested in various monopolies is to defeat the attempt of her Majesty's Government to effect a great and general improvement of our commercial policy. Is there any doubt that such an improvement is most urgently required? Is it not notorious that in every profession, in every trade and handicraft, in every mode of applying capital and industry, there is the same intense competition, the same extreme difficulty of finding the means of profitable employment? The complaint is universal, of the want of opportunities for men to exercise to advantage their talents and their industry. To what is this state of things to be attributed? How are these symptoms of something wrong in the condition of the country to be accounted for? The evil is caused by our unwise commercial policy, and by the mischievous restrictions which are imposed upon the exchange of produce between ourselves and other nations. Does any man doubt that there are many countries able and anxious to sell us articles of which we are in want? Does any man doubt that Baltic timber, Brazilian sugar, foreign corn, and a variety of other commodities, would find purchasers in this country if we would only consent to receive them; and, on the other hand, does any one doubt that if we received those commodities they must and would be paid for by our own manufactures; that those countries from which we took the produce of their industry and capital, would take in return from us the produce of ours, by which alone we could pay for what we received from them; and that thus every extension of the present restricted facilities for exchange with other countries, must directly tend to increase the means of employment for our own population. This proposition is so plain and clear, that I do not understand how it can for a moment be doubted, and I ask the House how can we then refuse to adopt such plain and simple means for relieving the wants and the distress so urgently felt in this country? But if we reject the general policy recommended by the Government, of endeavouring to increase the revenue by a relaxation of our protecting duties, the alternative is, not merely the refusal to the people of much-needed re-

lief, but the imposition upon them of some new and heavy burthen. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, whoever he may be, must come down to the House and propose some new tax, which will fall heavily upon the people, which will lead to the shutting up of a still greater number of houses in Bolton and other places, to the conversion of a large proportion of the poorest order of rate-payers into rate receivers. Some tax must be imposed, which will still further bow down to the ground the already over-burthened industry of the country. I say this must be the effect of any new tax; for if it is a tax upon consumption, it will not raise the required revenue, unless it is imposed upon some article in general use amongst the lower orders of the community; and if a tax falling less directly upon them—if a property tax or a house tax be reimposed, while it presses heavily upon the middle classes, it will fall also severely upon the lowest, as it will necessarily still further diminish the already scanty means of employment under which they are suffering, by diminishing the means of the more wealthy portion of the nation. I am persuaded that if hon. Gentlemen will take the trouble of seriously looking into the subject, they will see the extreme injustice, in the present state of the country, of providing for the wants of the state by the imposition of a new tax, while they may be met in the manner which her Majesty's Government have proposed. I am convinced that even those most interested, as they think, in existing monopolies, would find that it is for their benefit, as well as for that of others, to adopt a more liberal commercial policy. The landowner would be compensated for having a lower rate of protection on corn by avoiding the burthen of new taxes, and by getting rid of the other monopolies which he consents to support for the sake of preserving his own. In the same manner, the timber merchant and the planter do not calculate how much they indirectly lose by maintaining the other monopolies upon which the fate of their own depends. I believe that all these classes, even if their expectations of gain from existing monopolies were realised (as I am convinced they never really are), would find that a general relaxation of the system of monopoly and protection would be advantageous to them; but if there can be any doubt as to them, there can be none as to the public at large, the great body of consumers, those who are neither



landowners, nor shipowners, nor 'planters, who pay increased prices for bread, for timber, for sugar, for coffee for every description of protected goods, and who gain nothing in return; the poor distressed inhabitants of Bolton—the hand-loom weavers—the starving manufacturers—they clearly are sufferers by the present system—they clearly would be relieved by the change of policy which her Majesty's Government recommend. Sir, I know not what is the decision to which we are about to come; it may be that the House will reject the financial measures which her Majesty's Government have brought forward, but whatever may be the immediate result of their attempt to reform our commercial policy, of its ultimate triumph no man who has watched the signs of the times, and the progress of public opinion, can entertain the remotest doubt. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, may indeed upon this subject follow the same line of conduct, which no less unfortunately for his own reputation than for the interests of the country, he followed with respect to Catholic emancipation. His opposition may for the present be the means of defeating a great and necessary reform, which must, in the end, be carried. At the price of great suffering to the people, at the risk of permanently forfeiting many of the advantages which a timely step in the right direction would secure, he may succeed in staving off the day and the hour when a commercial reform must take place; but that it must ultimately be brought about, that in the end such a reform must be accomplished, is rendered inevitable by our financial necessities, even if there were no other causes in operation. The rapid progress of public opinion which must be perceptible to all who have observed what is going on in the country, points still more clearly to this as the certain issue of these discussions. Sir, if I wanted any proof of the immense advance which a liberal commercial policy has made in public estimation, I could find none more conclusive than that which has been furnished by this very debate. I can remember how little, but a few years ago, any Member of this House could venture broadly and fairly to argue in favour of the principles of commercial freedom. Even the great and liberal measures of Mr. Huskisson were carried in a great degree in disguise; in bringing them forward he was compelled to flatter the prejudices, and not unfrequently to profess the principles of

men of whose real ignorance he was well aware, and thus, while all his practical measures were tending towards freedom of trade, his language was often of a very different character. Sir, I well remember, that when I first had the honour of a seat in this House, the prevailing opinion was entirely in favour of monopoly, and what is termed protection; the few Gentlemen who dared to lift up their voices against the received doctrines of the day, were treated as visionaries and enthusiasts, and scarcely received the slightest attention from the House. How different is the case now? How striking is the contrast between the discussions of former days and the present debate? Now even those who, in fact, come forward to defend the system of monopoly, are, for the most part, ashamed of their cause, and are obliged to disguise their real motives by some more decent pretext. If we were to judge of hon. Members by their language, and not by their acts, the whole House is in favour of free trade; there is scarcely a difference of opinion amongst us, and we are almost unanimously agreed in approving of the most complete commercial freedom. We hear nothing now of the old language about the country flourishing by means of protection, and of the necessity of keeping up an army of custom-house officers to protect the British soil from being polluted by the produce of the industry of foreign nations, which may in the remotest degree interfere with our own. Now our language is quite altered, we are all for commercial freedom, only, as Mr. Huskisson once happily observed, each interest considers it bad in its own particular case, and there is always some special reason for making an exception from the practical application of the rule which, as a general one, is admitted to be sound. As in the present instance, we are told of the encouragement we should give to the slave trade; when the corn laws are discussed, the danger of depending upon foreign countries for a supply of food is talked of; in every case some special plea of this kind is put forward, only serving to show how sensible are even the advocates of protection, of the inherent weakness of the arguments in its favour. When we see that in the course of only a few years, public opinion has made such advances, and that so complete a change has taken place in the tone of debates in this House, we cannot surely surely entertain a doubt that our commercial policy, founded upon restriction and

monopoly, is not destined to endure for many years longer. I should rejoice if I thought that the House were now prepared to take the first step in the right direction; but even if the measure now proposed should be rejected, again I repeat, its ultimate success is certain. With this conviction, and with a firm persuasion that the course we are called upon to adopt is in accordance with sound policy and true wisdom, I shall give my vote with the greatest satisfaction in favour of the motion of my noble Friend.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* should have been content to leave the question for decision, on the arguments that had been adduced, if the House saw fit to close the debate; but, it having been understood that it was the pleasure of the House that it should continue open another night, he hoped he might be excused for not giving a silent vote upon the subject. It had been repeatedly contended on the other side of the House that the question was argued on that (the Opposition) side, on distinct and separate grounds, some objecting generally to the whole financial plan opened by the Government; and others, to that particular part of it which was the subject of the present motion, but this remark held good as applied to those who made it as well as those against whom it was addressed. He blamed neither side for adopting that line of argument, because it was a natural and necessary consequence of bringing forward a part of a measure for discussion, while the whole was pending. Upon the narrower question immediately before the House, although he even might, he would suppose for the sake of argument, be inclined to accede to the proposition, without reference to the score of humanity, he did not think that the present was a moment in which it should be made. The consequence of it would be the renewal of an agitation in the West Indies which had only just begun to subside, and the disruption of a state of society which was beginning again to assume a placid and settled form in those islands. Looking at the question on broader grounds, it seemed to him that as a measure of finance the exposition of the budget was wholly of an indefinite character. Every one saw that there was a great and alarming deficiency in the revenue of the country, and that this deficiency was an increasing one. But what had been the cause of it? It was created very much by a measure similar in some degree

to that proposed now—an experiment to increase the revenue by the reduction of taxation—an experiment undertaken, and carried out too, against the recommendation of some of the ablest officers of Government, namely, the Post-office experiment. The deficiency of the revenue caused by that experiment alone was nearly a million; and it was now proposed to supply that deficiency by a further reduction in the duty on Sugar and other articles. Speaking generally, he did not mean to state, that the experiment of reduction, with a view to the increase of consumption, and thereby of revenue, was not a fair and justifiable one. He had no objection to see it tried on a large scale under favourable circumstances; but in his opinion, the present circumstances were not favourable, and it was absolutely necessary to have a surplus revenue in hand, such as was possessed some two or three years since, and such as would, he entertained no doubt, be possessed again, before it was attempted. It was because the circumstances were similar to those now existing, that the Post-office experiment failed. What were the views of her Majesty's Government on the subject of the Corn-laws? He would refer to the words of the noble Lord at the head of the Treasury last year, when he stated that it would be "madness" to entertain a branch of the present proposition of the Government, and he would only advert generally to the repugnance of that noble Lord to bring it forward. On what grounds did the noble Lord oppose it then? On the ground of the agitation that it would produce in the country. Was there any reason to hope that the proposition would be carried this year more than the last, or, that the agitation on the subject would be less? None. On the contrary, there was quite as little hope of the one, and a much stronger ground to believe in an increase of the other. The noble Lord had said on this occasion that the advantage to be derived from carrying that proposition would be but ill purchased by the agitation which it would cause in the country, and yet the noble Lord and the Government must have well known, not alone that the same agitation would take place this year, and increase, but also that it was quite as impossible to carry it as in the last—that in short there was no such revulsion in the feeling of the public, as would give him the slightest chance of its success. What, then, could have been the

object of the Government of the noble Lord in proposing it now, but needless agitation? He was much surprised to hear the noble Lord opposite talk of the insincerity of the newly-sprung zeal on the Opposition side of the House in favour of slaves. If any anxiety was ever thoroughly felt upon a point in this country by all parties it was upon the subject of slavery—and he (Mr. Wynn) entirely repudiated the insinuation thrown out, that it was less for the interest of the slaves than for the interest of the West-India planters, that this zeal arose. The noble Lord argued that to be consistent, with those who opposed the admission of slave-grown sugar, should also reject all other slave-grown produce, such as the cotton and tobacco of America. But the answer to that argument was plain. It was a different thing to continue to receive the benefits of a trade long existing, and to open a new trade to the injury not alone of the slaves, but of our own fellow-countrymen, the West-India planters. It was stated that the injury to the planters would be more apparent than real, inasmuch as competition with foreign growers would stimulate them to increased production; but would not the very thing which was relied on for that stimulus to the free sugar trade also prove a stimulus to the slave trade? It was all very well to say that the duty proposed would give a sufficient protection to our colonists; but the eagerness of commercial speculators was not capable of such nice calculations, and little doubt could be entertained, that if accounts went out that this measure had been favourably entertained, the sea would immediately be covered by fresh swarms of slave-traders from Cuba and Brazil, in addition to those now employed in that detestable traffic. To say, however, that the slave importation would be effectually met by increased activity on the part of free labour was absurd; for while the planter who employed the latter, was gradually habituating the enfranchised slaves to labour for wages, and the altered state of society, the slave-holder would import fresh, active vigorous negroes from Africa and “work them up” or kill them off without remorse, to avail himself of the advantages of the market before his competitor, our own fellow subject. It would therefore be a long time, if ever it took place at all, before free labour, under these circumstances, could compete with slave-grown produce, or withstand the movement about to be made by her Majesty’s Government. But it was said

relief should be given to the consumer, as much as protection to the planter. He had no objection to that; on the contrary, he was anxious that it should be afforded so far as the highest interests of humanity would allow; but, what was the relief proposed? The largest calculation of the noble Lord taken in what may be termed an extreme case, amounted to no more than one shilling and sixpence in the hundred weight. Where, then, was the relief to the consumer. It had been urged, that to depend on the West Indies would be to risk a short supply of sugar. But to this the answer was ready—there was the East Indies, which produced this year 60,000 tons, and which, it was calculated, would produce next year not less than 100,000 tons. If competition were necessary for the West Indies there was competition, fair competition; and then, what became of the assertion of a short supply, when it was known that the greatest annual consumption of sugar in this country was only 200,000 tons. India produced at present nearly half that whole amount. Was not that a sufficient protection against monopoly on the part of the West-India planter? But on other grounds he looked on this question, as far as it regarded India, as of the utmost importance to justice and humanity. The manufactures of India had been extinguished by English manufactures. England was therefore bound to replace them by others. It was a just debt she owed to India? and it was incumbent on her to supply the native population with the means of paying for the commodities which she supplied to them. What more advantageous means existed than the sugar trade? The present, therefore, was not the time to encourage foreign and slave-grown sugar to the detriment of this important nascent manufacture in India. He could not perceive the advantages suggested by the noble Lord, the Member for Northumberland, nor could he justify himself in hazarding the encouragement of slavery and the character of England with foreign nations for any reason whatever, still less for advantages only in prospect. A sufficient time had not yet elapsed to give slave emancipation in the West Indies a fair trial; and though there might be many arguments for laying an additional duty on foreign sugar, he (Mr. Wynn) confessed he could not see one for reducing it lower than it now was. The noble Lord had

taken much credit to his party for their exertions in emancipating the slaves: but the House would, no doubt, remember that if there ever was a subject on which the differences of party were more completely sacrificed than another it was that subject; and he should, therefore, have paused before he attributed to any party in particular the whole merit of carrying it out. What carried that measure was not only the union of the leading men on both sides of the House, but the growing opinion of the country, the determination of the rising generation against that atrocious system. The noble Lord had said that the party of which he assumed himself to be the representative, had refused office in 1812, on account of the Catholic question; but he would remind him, that on the contrary it distinctly appeared, that Lord Moira had urged it as a plea for their taking office that they would have the means of carrying the Catholic question. The fact was, that they had refused office because they would not except the Royal Household from the interference of the Ministers of the country. That was the ground upon which Lord Grenville and Lord Grey then acted, though it was a ground which it might not be convenient now for the noble Lord to state. The noble Lord who had last sat down, had alluded to the great merit of Captain Denman in destroying the slave settlements on the coast of Africa. He might rejoice at this destruction, but he could not understand the consistency of those who called them bigots for refusing to receive slave-grown sugar, and for endeavouring to force the growth of free-labour sugar in our own colonies, and who, at the same time, praised the laudable exertions of Captain Denman in destroying the settlements of an independent country because a number of slaves happened to be collected there to be sold. He, for one, was willing to see stronger measures adopted for exterminating slavery—and he did not believe that the sugar consumer of this country would willingly take advantage of an increased impetus to that system of piracy, robbery, and oppression. Whether he looked at the general question, or at the question as it affected sugar merely, he was equally determined to give the plan of the Government his hearty opposition, and he was sure the great majority of the people participated in that feeling.

Mr. W. Evans said, that he had always taken part against slavery and the slave-

trade in that House, and out of it he had joined a small body of individuals who had endeavoured to raise in this country a sense of the enormity of that system; he believed he had on no occasion given a vote in opposition to his right hon. and learned Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, and it was only because on that occasion he was obliged to come to a different conclusion, that he thought it necessary to offer any observations to the House. They had granted twenty millions in the hope and expectation of getting a peaceful and satisfactory settlement of the question, but that was a question of degree, and if they had been called upon to vote fifty millions, would any man have yielded to that claim? He had never considered, that he was bound at no time, and under no circumstances, to admit foreign sugar, be the price of sugar in this country what it might. The hon. Member for Newark had said, that already they had expended ten millions in the increased price of sugar. In the last year he found no less a sum than 2,600,000*l.* had been expended in that way, and under these circumstances, he thought the Government was bound to adopt some measures in order to prevent the recurrence of so heavy a pressure. He was not prepared to say, that for the next seven years he would consent to spend ten millions more upon that object, the state of the manufacturing interests of this country, and even of the labouring classes in the agricultural interest, would not warrant such a sacrifice. But it was said, that the larger quantities which were to come from the East and West Indies might relieve them from all fears of that kind. He was glad to hear it, he hoped the calculations were correct, but, from what he had heard, he was not convinced that that would be the ordinary state of things from year to year in a few years to come. But if that were the case, then what harm could the reduction of these duties do? There would then be no occasion to fear an increased stimulus to the slave-trade. Looking at the returns he found, that from 1823 to 1837 there was not one year in which reckoning the price of foreign and colonial sugar with the addition of the proposed duty, our own colonial sugar would not have been the cheaper of the two. In 1837 it would have been dearer by something less than 1*s.*, and in 1838 it would have been cheaper again.

Then in 1839 and 1840 the difference was considerable, from the great increase of price which had taken place in our colonial sugar. He would content himself with adding, that in the present state of this country they were bound not to impose on the population such heavy burdens, merely to prevent the probability—for it was no more than a probability at the most—of giving a stimulus to that detestable and wretched system of slavery and the slave-trade. We allowed our colonies to consume slave-grown sugar, and he believed, that we could not prevent them from doing it. If these had not been the conclusions to which he conscientiously came on this subject, he would not change his opinions to serve any Ministry, not even to serve any interests of his own, but he really did not think, that they ought to impose enormous increased taxes on the article of sugar to prevent the probability of the introduction of small quantities of foreign sugar. As to the other questions he would only express his conviction, that no Government had ever proposed measures so likely to be beneficial to the great body of the people as were those now proposed, and he trusted that every means would be taken to ensure their success.

Lord Worsley said, that if he could have brought himself to believe, that the measures which her Majesty's Government had introduced were for the benefit of the country, he should have contented himself with a silent vote on this occasion, but, thinking that they were measures injurious to the best interests of the empire—thinking that there was no necessity for such a measure as the reduction of the sugar duties, thinking that the distress in the manufacturing districts was not the consequence of the existing Corn-laws, and that it would not be relieved even were those Corn-laws to be altered, he felt it necessary to state the reasons why he must vote against that Government which he had hitherto supported. The hon. Member for Sheffield had declared, that there must be something in the air of Lincolnshire which induced all its Members to rise in arms against the Government as soon as the slightest attempt was made to meddle with the Corn-laws. He would tell the hon. Member for Sheffield, that the reason why he and his colleagues now voted against the Government was, that there were in Lincolnshire not only

many rich landholders, but also many poor yeomen holders of small portions of land, who would be entirely ruined if sufficient protection was not given them while carrying on their trade as cultivators of the soil. Such a protecting duty as was now offered them was quite inadequate for any purposes of protection. Burdened as they were with taxation, it was impossible that they could compete with other countries in cheap production. From the evidence given before the last committee on the Corn-laws by Mr. Saunders, an eminent merchant of Liverpool, who had been engaged for thirty years in the corn trade, relating to the policy of fixed duties, he was clearly of opinion that such a duty would not be maintained on corn. He concluded from it too, that if the present fluctuating duties were reduced to a fixed duty of 8s. a quarter, all our merchants would endeavour to get their corn from the ports of the Baltic. In the opinion of Mr. Saunders the present scale of fluctuating duties was the best, and more calculated than any fixed duty to preserve steady prices. This was Mr. Saunders's opinion, and to illustrate it he would state, that there was at present in some of our ports corn in bond which could be had at the rate of 38s. If that were let out at a low fixed duty what would become of the farmers of this country? or what chance would they have of competing with such corn? The same causes which forced a Government to alter the present system of substituting a duty of 8s. would at some future period oblige them to remove the duty altogether. He was borne out by the report of the committee on the state of agriculture of 1833, in asserting, that great danger which would result from interfering with the Corn-laws. In 1833 prices were so low that the farmers had gone on in the confidence that the Corn-laws would be continued. He was warranted in saying, that had the low prices continued for two or three years longer, many of the smaller farmers would have been ruined, and obliged to give up their farms; and the result would be to throw the agricultural labourers on the poor-rates. He did not think, that sufficient notice had been given of the Government measures, nor did he think the Ministers justified in bringing forward the question at the present time. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had said, that he did not consider it fair or just to

bring forward the question on the sugar duties, or of the timber duties, without at the same time bringing forward the question of the Corn-laws. He would like to ask the noble Lord, whether he had the slightest chance of getting the measure regarding the Corn-laws passed through that House. There was not the most remote chance of the noble Lord effecting that, and if the noble Lord had no chance of carrying the three questions, he ought to have abstained from bringing forward any one of them. He had heard it stated, in the course of the debate, that the manufacturers of Manchester wished a free trade in corn, and that they were willing to forego the protective duties on manufactured goods. It was all very well for them to hold that argument, because they were certain that the Legislature would never concede such a measure; or, if it was conceded, they knew that Government would, in lieu of it, impose a property tax. His own opinion was, that those persons who now clamoured for a repeal of the Corn-laws, would accept the measure of Government as an instalment only. They might remain satisfied, perhaps for three or four years, but whenever corn rose to 60s. they would raise an outcry against the duty of 8s. He was convinced that Government was not aware of the feeling which existed in the agricultural parts of the kingdom on this subject, otherwise he thought they would never have ventured to bring forward their present proposition. His reasons for objecting to it was, because he thought that a sufficient protective duty was necessary for the interests of the agriculturists, and he would not be doing his duty to his constituents, nor would he be acting honestly or consistently, if he did not oppose the proposal of the Government.

Sir A. Grant heard with great satisfaction the speech of the noble Lord who had just addressed the House. For his own part, he would not have troubled the House on the present occasion, had he not been deeply interested in the question under discussion. To that question he meant to confine himself. In the first place, he begged to call the attention of the House to the fact, that all the evidence which had been brought before them—whether that on which the right hon. Member for Devonport, had relied, or the testimony of Mr. Joseph Gurney,

which had been adduced by other hon. Members—all that evidence tended to show that the cultivation of sugar could not be carried on in the emancipated British colonies if the slave-grown sugar of Cuba and of Brazil, was to be admitted into competition with it. The hon. Member for Devonport had alluded to the compensation granted to the West-India planters. He was not going to deny that 20,000,000*l.* was a large compensation. But at the period when that sum was granted, the West-India proprietors, rightfully or wrongfully, were possessed of their slaves by the laws of the land—he had a freehold in them—they were subjected to the same laws as landed property, and they descended in the same way. He defied hon. Members to deny it. Such was the fact. They were subjected to the same laws which affected all other property. Nay, the right to them was transmitted in the same way, and they were made the subject of settlements and of mortgage. [*Hear*]. He understood those cheers. He was not defending the system, but was only stating the *ase*. To these slaves and to their labour the planters possessed an undoubted right. If the Legislature interfered with private rights, it was bound to compensate the parties for any damage sustained. Take the case where, for the purpose of opening a thoroughfare, it was found necessary to destroy certain streets. They could not do so without granting the value of the property to private individuals, not the value which they might put on it, but the value appraised by an indifferent party. The value of the slaves in the West-Indies had been made by officers under the colonial government. Was that appraisal 20,000,000*l.*? No. If his memory did not deceive him it was three times twenty millions. Was it to be supposed that the West-India proprietors, would have acquiesced in the grant of 20,000,000*l.* had they foreseen that the consequences would have been the destruction altogether of the property they possessed? He had said, that the compensation of 20,000,000*l.* was only a third of the sum which they had been thought entitled to. Suppose he was correct in his statement, it would appear that the West-India proprietors were losers by their acceptance of partial compensation to the amount of 40,000,000*l.* Allowing that they had received 10,000,000*l.* in the shape of

profit on the increased price of sugar, since the free labour system commenced, yet were they still losers to the extent of 30,000,000*l.* On a moderate calculation, West-India property of the value of not less than 150,000,000*l.* had been interfered with. Where, then, was the extraordinary magnificence of the grant which had been so tauntingly alluded to by the noble Lord opposite, and by other speakers, in the course of the debate. If it was given in the idea that the people of this country would thereby acquire the right to interfere with the estates of the West-India proprietors, it was given with a fraudulent intention. The right hon. Member for Devonport, had characterised the language of the petition presented by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, from the West-India proprietors, as the language of gross hypocrisy. He had looked into the prayer of that petition, and he was at a loss to understand on what grounds the right hon. Gentleman had stigmatised the petitioners as hypocrites. They merely stated, that in the present condition of the West-Indies, they should be unable to compete with foreign slave-grown sugar. What limits did the hon. Gentleman intend to put on the charitable principle of visiting the sins of the father on the children of the third and fourth generation. He ought to be reminded that the sin of slavery was forced on the West-India proprietors by the mother country. In the original settlement of these possessions, the grants of land were made under condition of the planter importing a certain number of slaves from Africa. The sovereign, who then wielded the sceptre of the realm, took shares in the African adventures, and slavery was established under the authority of England. He thought it was always a bad sign of a case when the advocates of it had recourse to misrepresentations to sustain that case. The right hon. Member for Devonport had stated that the West-India proprietors had adapted their statements of the state of cultivation and their expectations of produce to the purposes of the occasion, and that they had given this country to understand that there would be an increase when, in fact, there turned out to be a deficiency in the supply. Now, the right hon. Gentleman was Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, from 1836 to 1839, and he knew that the right hon. Gentleman had paid very close

attention to his official duties. From the communications which he must have received from the colonial governments, he must have known what would be the inevitable effect of the total determination of the apprenticeship of the negroes in August, 1838. That act was the act of the planters, no doubt, but the consequences were, that the negroes neglected the planting operations of that autumn, on which the increase of future crops totally depended. That explained the decrease in the crop of 1840, and it would not be until 1842 that they would begin to derive the benefits of the industry of free labour. After 1842, he was perfectly satisfied, from the reports which he had received from his own property, that the statement of the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, as to an increased supply of sugar from the West Indies, was perfectly correct. From calculations on which he could place the most implicit reliance, he felt assured that for the future the supply of sugar from the East and West Indies would be fully equal to the wants of this country, and if they did not receive the supply expected from the West Indies, all he could say was that the experiment of emancipation, in which certain hon. Gentlemen so much exulted, would be nothing more nor less than a complete failure. It had been insinuated, in the course of the debate, that the West-India proprietors had been in the practice of sending the whole of their free-labour sugar to England, and importing slave grown sugar for their own use. The fact was otherwise; foreign slave grown refined sugar was exported from this country by speculators, who sent out cargoes, and no person inquired where it was sold or whence it came. The West-India proprietors would be very much obliged to the House to put an end to this traffic. It was not concurred in by them; they had petitioned against it; therefore, it was a little hard to turn upon them, and found an argument for enacting a law against them, on the ground that slave grown sugar was already imported into the West Indies. The many millions paid by this country to put down slavery and the slave trade—amounting, according to his own estimation, to not less than 130 millions sterling—no one put it at less than forty millions—would be entirely thrown away, if the present measure were carried, which would have the inevitable

effect of giving direct encouragement to slavery and the slave trade. Where was the consistency of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his Colleagues, when he now put at nought in his consideration the encouragement of slavery and the slave trade when brought into competition with a slight reduction of the duty on sugar—where was his consistency in acting thus, when only last year he opposed the introduction of additional labourers into the West Indies upon the ground that, because the Hill-coolies were to be hired under deeds of apprenticeship, it would be giving a degree of encouragement to a species of slavery? For his part, he was satisfied with the argument as it now stood before the House, being convinced that, however much the debate might be protracted—and it appeared to him to have been prolonged too much already—no further argument could be urged in favour of the Ministerial measure, and that no additional argument was at all needful to justify its rejection.

Mr. John O'Connell said, he trusted the hon. Baronet who had just spoken, would take his assurance of meaning him no personal offence in saying, that a part of what fell from him was calculated to excite feelings akin to disgust. He meant the allusion to a right of property in slaves. Laws of men recognised that right, but it was utterly denied by the laws of God. As for the 20,000,000*l.* grant, it ought to have been styled an act of charity, not a compensation. It was a question for the moralist, whether compensation were not rather due from the West Indians themselves, to the negroes whom they so long kept out of their rights as men. With regard to the question before the House, he (Mr. J. O'Connell) felt anxious, as one who had taken part, according to his very limited ability, in the anti-slavery agitation in Ireland, to explain to his constituents in that country why he should vote against the amendment of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool. He did so, because whatever might be the noble Lord's sincerity in bringing it forward, he believed his advisers and supporters were not acting *bond fide*. He could not put confidence in their very sudden conversion from the convictions that had led them formerly to oppose everything that was for the benefit of the negro. If this were a motion as the noble Lord said, simply against the en-

couragement of slavery, why was it not confined to that, and why were words introduced from which the inference could be drawn, that under circumstances other than the present, hon. Gentlemen opposite might consent to admit slave sugar. They would have an opportunity, should the House go into committee, of proving their sincerity, as a motion would then be made to admit foreign sugar indeed, but only what shall be the product of free labour. Such sugar was to be had from Java, Siam, and other places; and if the English market were opened to the producers in those countries, the production would of course be much stimulated and enlarged. The Government measure would only apply in case of a deficiency of sugar from our own dependencies, therefore no very excessive amount of sugar might be required from any foreign country. The hon. Member for Newark told the House, that treaties stood in the way of our admitting foreign free grown sugar to the exclusion of foreign slave grown sugar—but he had not told the House whether those treaties were not likely soon to end, or whether they could not be in some way modified under the pressure of two such strong considerations as the necessity of giving the people cheap sugar, and at the same time taking care not to give encouragement to slave labour. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) had heard with much concern one statement of the hon. Member for Wigan, that it was impossible to draw a line of distinction between slave grown and free grown sugar coming from abroad. He had anxiously listened for the reasons of this, feeling that, if supported by argument, it would leave him no alternative but to vote for the amendment before the House. But the only reason given was, that international trade would go on, in spite of the opinions of individuals. Trade undoubtedly would go on, as it often has done before, between nations, no matter under what iniquitous system, but that surely could not be a reason for not amending what was iniquitous in the system. A trade that should give encouragement to slave labour, would be giving the sanction of this country to the worst species of robbery—that which deprived a man of his right over himself and his own labour. But the hon. Member had said, that commerce would put an end to slavery. He (Mr. J. O'Connell) considered, that on the contrary, slavery had been put an end to in the West Indies by the exertions of the anti slavery movement,



which produced a direct legislative interference for the purpose; and not by commerce. Slavery was as rife as ever in America, notwithstanding our commerce with her. But it had been said, that our abstinence from slave grown sugar would not prevent other countries from using it—and that after all, our allowing it to enter, would give little practical encouragement to slavery. If others did wrong, it was no reason we should; and as to the last argument, one single case of additional suffering would involve the whole guilt. In thus arguing, he trusted he should not be considered as insensible to the wants of the people. An Irish Member had particular reason to wish for the cheapening of sugar if possible, as in Ireland it was only too true, that the average consumption of sugar by each person was not more than an ounce in the week. But far greater distress even than that, would be still no reason for encouraging the horrors of slavery. While he agreed on these points with the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, he regretted to differ with him in anything. He could assure that right hon. Gentleman, that he (Mr. J. O'Connell) would consider himself fortunate, if, at any future period of his life, he ever could effect the one millionth part of what had been done for the negro by the learned civilian, but he could not imitate his example in voting for the amendment, as it went to exclude all foreign sugar, free as well as slave grown. The West Indians had no claim to a protection against the former. They had got a most munificent grant from this country, and had no right to further favour at the cost of the people at home. Such protection was not needed, either for the benefit of the newly emancipated negroes, as they ought to be able to bear competition, especially when the price of foreign free grown sugar would still be so high, owing to the high duty still to be kept up. With regard to the general question before the House, he would not enter at any length upon it. He would only say as an Irish Member, that he might be supposed hostile to any change in the Corn-laws. This was not the case. He had never seen any good they had done to Ireland. She had the command of the English market, and no manufactures of her own to suffer by being excluded from foreign markets in return for the exclusion of foreign corn. Those laws, therefore, had had the fullest and fairest experiment in Ireland, and yet had

certainly been of no benefit to the labouring population or the farmers there, the former being in a state of the most utter misery, and the latter fast sinking down to the condition of the class below them. He was also much pleased with the reduction of the duties on the good timber to be had from the North of Europe. He would not detain the House longer than to say, that in Committee he would vote to exclude foreign slave sugar and admit that which was free grown, and in the meantime could not vote for the amendment, first, because it would exclude the latter description of sugar, and next, because it was designed under cover of a zeal for the African, to overthrow a liberal ministry, and to bring in one, that, to judge by their past history, would be more likely to add to the burthens of the people, than to give them relief.

Sir J. R. Reid, after adverting to a letter which he had received from Mr. Horsley Palmer, explanatory of his views on the question before the House, stated, that he felt bound to admit that he had received the utmost courtesy from many of the Members of her Majesty's Government during the various official interviews he had had with them, but while he acknowledged this, he did not hesitate to add that a more reckless, a more inconsiderate, or, more injudicious Government he never heard of or saw. He merely wished to impress this upon their minds, as he believed that this would be the last time he should have the honour to address them in their official situations. A short period ago, he requested them to reconsider the decision they had come to. They paid no attention to his request. He conceived, from the experience he had had, and at his time of life, he was entitled to give that advice. He did not hesitate to add that their sun was setting, and that it would soon set to rise no more. It was not his intention to detain the House more than another minute. He would not go into details, they were so well known; but his anxious hope, wish, and request was, that with respect to the commercial interests of the country, the House would kindly decide upon this important question, because in the meantime trade was at a complete stand still. He said this as an old merchant, who had no object in stating what was not the fact. He did entreat the House to come to a decision. It was absolutely impossible for Gentlemen who were not, like himself,

intimately acquainted with commercial affairs, to conceive the mischief which was occasioned by protracting this debate. The hon. Member for Halifax made use of an expression last night which very much astonished him. He said, that trade was in a state of despondency such as was never known before. Now, he never heard such a remark in his life. That there was langour in commerce he did not deny. That there was a want of purchasing and selling he did not deny also. But what was the reason? Why, that no man of any property, under existing circumstances, would embark a shilling in trade. Therefore, it was that he called for a decision of this question: and the sooner the better. In the city with which he was connected, it was the universal feeling among all parties that this question ought not to be protracted. Having to thank the House for the kindness with which the House had heard him, he would sit down. The House would decide which was the greatest hypocrite of the two. He did not think he had shown much hypocrisy in stating his candid opinion of her Majesty's Ministers. He wanted nothing, he asked for nothing but the immediate and decided opinion of the House upon this great question.

Mr. *Gisborne* did not think he should have troubled the House at this protracted period of the debate, but that he could not allow it to close without returning his thanks to the hon. Member for Newark. He had often heard it said, that a man's best friends were those who told him his faults. The hon. Member for Newark had been so kind as to perform that friendly office. He had said to hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House, "You are an infatuated set, and that infatuation arises from the laxity of your principles." That was pretty good in substance, and the manner was so bland! There was no appearance of a bigotted religionist, dealing out his anathemas of religious rancour against all those who differed from him. It was quite evident from the mildness of his tone and the modesty of his deportment, that it was a gentleman addressing a liberal assembly, among whom he felt that there were many who were his equals, and not a few who were his superiors. The hon. Gentleman made some remarks with respect to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary-at-War (Mr. Macaulay). Last night when

he had possession of the House he gave way, because he understood, that that right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macaulay) wished to address the House. Being obliged to leave his seat he did not know what passed on that occasion; but he wished to make one remark with respect to the father of that right hon. Gentleman. It was the fate of the late Mr. Zachary Macaulay to be for many years of his life the victim of the most foul calumny, falsehood, and slander, heaped upon him by the West-Indian body and their supporters, and he thought that that eminent man would be much surprised if it were possible for him to know that, after his death, a person who was once, at least, connected with that body, had passed a studied eulogium upon him in Parliament—an eulogium, not greater, certainly, than his merits deserved, but an eulogium which he (Mr. Gisborne) was sure that excellent person would have rejected with all the scorn and disgust which his mild and gentle nature was capable of, if he could only have known that the object of it was to give point and venom to a stigma upon his son. By common consent the Chancellor of the Exchequer discarded the two usual modes of supplying the deficiency in the revenue—borrowing and direct taxation; and, in order to give time for the consideration of the subject, he had deferred the discussion for a week. At the end of that time the noble Member for Liverpool came down with a motion, not upon the merits, but in the nature of a demurrer, resting it mainly upon certain exaggerated calculations of the quantity of sugar to be received from the Mauritius, the East and West Indies. From the Mauritius it was asserted that 40,000 tons might be expected, when the average receipt of sugar from thence had been only about 28,000 tons. In a speech delivered by Sir R. Peel, in June, 1833, he had anticipated a great reduction in the import from the West Indies, the stimulus to labour arising from coercion having been lost by emancipation, and the stimulus to labour arising from the necessities of the negroes having little or no influence upon those whose wants were few in a country which supplied those wants almost spontaneously. As to the quantity of sugar to be expected from the East Indies, he could quote the opinion of a connection of his own well acquainted with the subject, that a considerable time must elapse before any large

supply of cheap-grown sugar was procured from the East Indies. He, therefore, placed no reliance upon the estimates produced on the other side in opposition to the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. On the subject of slavery he was most firmly convinced that it must ere very long come to an end; the treaties with foreign powers tended to this result, and what had recently taken place in America, showed that there was a growing feeling against it there. In Cuba the whites were rather rejoiced at the measures of this country, to put an end to the importation of slaves, in consequence of the immense disproportion at present between the Europeans and the negroes. He would not detain the House farther than by reading a passage he had met with the other day, in a speech delivered in the House of Commons on the 31st July, 1833. It ran thus—

“There are many questions on which the declaration of the King’s Government in their favour or otherwise is decisive of their fate; we find this to have been the case with respect to the question of reform. I believe it will also be found the case with respect to this question. The moment the King’s Government arrays itself against any restriction, its fate is sealed, for it is impossible to restore respect to authorities so treated.”

These were the words of Sir Robert Peel, and thus supported, he (Mr. Gisborne) was bold to say, that the fate of the Corn-laws and of the present duty on sugar was sealed.

Mr. Sydney Herbert would promise not to detain the House long whilst he made a few observations on the question under discussion, and stated the reasons which would induce him to take the course which he intended to pursue. He had observed, on the part of Gentlemen at the other side of the House, a great disinclination to meet distinctly the resolution of his noble Friend. A great part of the evening had been occupied by hon. Members, at the other side of the House, in pouring out the vials of their wrath on the head of his hon. Friend, the Member for Newark, which he (Mr. S. Herbert) considered to be a just tribute, wrung from them in spite of themselves, to the pungency of his hon. Friend’s remarks, as well as to the force of his reasoning. But the character and principles of his hon. Friend stood too high to give any reason to fear, that either could be endangered by any such attacks.

He would not follow the example that had been set him by hon. Members opposite, in discussing the principles of free trade—principles ostentatiously enunciated by hon. Gentlemen opposite, as if they were the discoverers of them. These principles had been practically enunciated many years ago, by a Cabinet of which Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Peel, were prominent members. Nobody could dispute the theory. The only objection that existed was as to the mode of their application. Why, so simple was the theory of the principles of free trade, that a child might understand it, provided, that those principles were to be applied as an inflexible mathematical rule. It might be easy to apply those principles if they were not bound to consider the particular circumstances under which they were to be applied, and if men were to shut their eyes in the application of those principles, without reference to existing circumstances in a great commercial country like this. But, if those principles could be applied without wisdom and without caution, what was the use of the statesmanship, the knowledge of history, and of the Parliamentary history of this country, which was possessed by Gentlemen at both sides of the House. Why, if those principles were to be applied as a simple rule, requiring no knowledge for its application, in that case, there was not an accountant in the city who would not make as good a Chancellor of the Exchequer as the right hon. Gentleman opposite. Now, with respect to the period when this proposition was brought forward, all the means of information, that they possessed, went to show, that all might calculate on a most abundant supply of sugar next year from the East and West Indies; and they had the knowledge, that such were the capabilities of those places where free-grown sugar was produced, this country might be supplied with it to an indefinite extent. That was the evidence given before a Parliamentary Committee, by a highly respectable witness, and what was the opinion casually given by Mr. Larrent, before the same committee on this very question of the introduction of the sugar of Cuba and the Brazils? It was this, that if we were to permit the introduction of slave-grown sugar, we should stultify all the exertions that we had made for the suppression of the slave trade. The noble Lord opposite had argued, that though

an objection was raised to the introduction of slave-grown sugar, yet that we admitted the introduction of slave-grown cotton. But he did not think, that the argument against the introduction of slave-grown products was at all touched by this sort of reasoning. By the introduction of slave-grown sugar into this country, its consumption would be increased; its production would likewise be increased; and by opening new markets for those slave-grown products you would create a necessity for an additional supply of slave-labour. They should recollect the claims to their consideration which the West Indies possessed. They should recollect all the changes that had taken place with respect to those colonies since 1833—the emancipation of the negroes, the withdrawal of the drawback, the equalisation of the duties on East and West India sugar, and other measures all through the interference of our legislation, and under these circumstances it must be admitted, that it was only fair to allow them a moderate protection, to enable them to compete on fair terms with other countries. With all the disadvantages with which the West Indies had to struggle, if they now took away from them the small protection that they enjoyed, they would altogether destroy the production of sugar in these colonies. He knew, that hon. Gentlemen opposite, acting on their principles of free trade, might say, "If that colony is not able to grow sugar, so as to compete with other countries, why let it continue to be grown there?" Ay, but if we destroy the production of sugar in that colony, see the position we shall stand in with regard to our experiment for the abolition of slavery. They had contended for the principle that it was possible, that sugar could be successfully cultivated by free labour, and they had in this respect given an example to other nations in the suppression of slavery. But if we now show, that sugar cannot be so cultivated, we shall have only tried the experiment of abolition to demonstrate its failure. With what face shall we go to other countries to ask them to follow our example, and pursue a course which we shall have just shown them to be impossible. Instead of an example, we shall be a warning, and our abolition will only have served to rivet the chains of slavery by showing the impossibility of free labour to compete with it. If they expostulated

with America upon the continuance of slavery in that country, they would be met with the doctrine of the noble Lord opposite, that they must not mix up humanity with trade. These were grave and important considerations, which, he was sure, must have been overlooked by the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, in his eagerness to advance the interests in his peculiar department. When they saw men like the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, and Members at his (Mr. S. Herbert's) side of the House, whose opinions were entitled to great respect, protesting against these measures, he thought, that there was sufficient to make them pause before they adopted them. The people of this country could not so easily estimate motives, and could only judge of men by their actions. He recollected, a few years ago, when great excitement prevailed in this country upon the slavery question. At that time, no person professed a more enthusiastic hostility to West-India slavery, than the noble Lord opposite, and no person was louder in the expression of his desire to put down that system, and sustain the national character. There was no person more ready than the noble Lord in professing sympathy for the slave, or more eager to second the national feeling. But now the noble Lord seemed to forget the principles which he then advocated. The people of this country would know how to estimate the difference between the conduct of those who at the risk of temporary unpopularity, resisted what they thought to be unjust and incompatible with humanity, and those who came forward to advocate those principles which they expected to gain them popular applause, but who so far forgot their former professions as to put a question of humanity in competition with a question of finance. He thought, that this measure had been brought forward in a way that led it to be supposed, that it had been brought forward less with regard to the exigencies of the people than to the exigencies of party. Having expressed the general grounds on which he opposed these measures, he would, without the least apprehension of the result, leave to the decision of the House a question in which the credit and reputation of this country were deeply involved.

Mr. *Vernon Smith* could assure the House, that he should strictly follow the example of the hon. Gentleman who had

just addressed the House, and would very briefly occupy their attention. He could not help remarking, that in the course of the debate, the resolution of the noble Lord opposite had received very little attention, and the hon. Member who had seconded the resolution, had not paid the noble Lord the compliment of confining himself to the particular subject of it. He was not surprised that the hon. Member who had just sat down, had declined discussing the question of free trade, for though he had declared himself an advocate of the principles of free trade, he had qualified his declaration by excluding all interests in this country from the operation of those principles. The hon. Member stated, that the general principles of free trade were so simple, that any child might understand them; and yet two hon. Members opposite (the hon. Member for the University of Oxford, and the hon. Member for Antrim) had declared last night, that they could not comprehend them. He admitted that the speeches of those hon. Members were most straight forward, the hon. Member for the University of Oxford said, that his noble Friend's resolution did not go so far as he wished, for that the resolution ought to have declared, that under no circumstances would this country admit for consumption sugar, the produce of slave-labour. The hon. Member for the University of Oxford seemed to take great credit to himself for his exertions in the cause of the abolition of slavery. In looking over the speeches of the hon. Member, he had been unable to find that he had played so prominent a part in the discussions upon the abolition of slavery as the House had been led to believe. When the proposition for slavery abolition was first brought forward, he did not find that he had once addressed the House, but when the question was brought forward, by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, he once spoke, and then he used only these words:—

"He was of opinion that the right hon. Secretary would find himself as unfortunate in the use of the words 'immediate abolition,' as he had already found himself in the words 'extinction of tithes.'"

But, though he should be loath to impute any hypocritical pretext to the hon. Baronet, he must declare, that the straightforwardness of his speech last night, had

not been followed out by the straightforwardness of his declaration as to the vote which he intended to give; because, although he said the resolution did not go far enough, he stated his intention to support it by his vote. For his own part, his objection to the resolution was this, that it appeared to him to advance a position which was contrary to the true state of the facts. It assumed, that the people of England had made great sacrifices, not for the purpose of doing that which had been effected, but with some other object, which was now, for the first time, brought forward. He denied that the people of this country had done this with a view to set an example to other countries. They had paid the money which they had advanced for a valuable purpose, and with a view to the extinction of slavery in our colonies, which was an object which they had attained. The bargain was complete, for which the payment was made; and if any one doubted this, he might look at the present state of the West-India Islands, and compare it with the present condition of the people of this country. What was the condition of the labourers of our colonies? He feared that it had been described by Sir C. Metcalfe, so far as the colony of Jamaica was concerned, in terms worthy the observation of the House. He said,

"The real difficulty with regard to the prosperity of the proprietors appears to me to consist in the means possessed by the labourer of comfortable subsistence independent of labour for wages. He may have recourse to the latter for the sake of money, or handsome clothing, or luxury, but he is hardly ever reduced to it from absolute necessity. The social order of things prevailing in other countries is thereby severed in this, and it is here no favour to give employment, but an assumed and almost acknowledged favour to give labour."

That was the condition of the people of Jamaica, and it was for that that the people of England had made the sacrifice which had been alluded to. They had intended to make the population of our colonies free and happy, but they had not intended to make them so independent as to be even above the middling classes of this country in position. The state of the labouring population in British Guiana had been described as being infinitely more prosperous;—Governor Light,

in a despatch, dated in 1840, thus describes the condition of the labouring population there:—

“The negroes are all eager to buy land, and have comfortable cottages; most of them are better dressed on holidays, marriages, and funerals, than the generality of the peasantry of Europe; they will not wear coarse cloth. The generality sleep on as good beds as persons of a higher order in Europe; a sideboard, with a display of decanters and glasses, invariably decks the apartment of the head men. The negro is in everything an imitator, and his wants increase as he sees his own class advance in refinement. There is more champagne drunk by the negroes than by any other class in the colony. He likes salt fish, ham, and salt pork, better than fresh meat; but it is the prevailing taste of three-fourths of the white and coloured population: though he prefers plantain and “foo-foo” (a paste made by beating the plantain in a mortar)—he only follows the example of the white manager and overseer, who, in nine instances out of ten, consider such vegetable additions better adapted to the salt food than bread. The increasing importations of flour prove, however, that bread, though nearly double the price in England, is universally eaten. There is hardly an estate on which bread is not made for sale; it must be the purest white, or it will not be bought—brown or inferior bread is unknown. Men who could buy rum at half the price of gin, prefer the high price of the latter. Set them to celebrate a wedding, or a festival day, and they run into expenses, with ready money at command, which a substantial yeoman of England could not afford. Many of them keep horses, not a few gigs, and are seen, in the country districts, driving their families to church, with the female part of the family dressed in Sunday finery—parasols and umbrellas—which, but for the black hue of the wearers, would lead you to suppose yourself in England. People with such tastes cannot be said to have few wants.”

He should explain, that “foo-foo,” was made by beating up plantains in a mortar, something better than the dinner of herbs which the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had said, that the people of England would rather eat, than that slavery should continue. That sentiment of the right hon. and learned Gentleman had been loudly cheered by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, who had shown a marvelous change of political opinion, in thus cheering sentiments which he had all his life dissented from. If this was the condition of the West Indian, how could any hon. Gentleman assert that the bargain had not been completed? He rejoiced that such

was the case; but when hon. Gentlemen opposite called on the country to submit to fresh burdens, for the sake of the negro, he contended that they went further than was ever contemplated by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, or the hon. Members who supported him in carrying through the Emancipation Act. He contended, that the resolution now brought forward by his noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool, should be considered as strictly a commercial measure, because it was neither more nor less than a measure for the protection of West-India interests. It was true that the law for the protection of the West-India interest was made when the noble Lord's constituents dealt in slaves, but now he attempted to continue it by assuming a purpose which he hoped to be able to show was not his real purpose. It appeared to him that the noble Lord, in bringing forward his resolution, ought entirely to have omitted the mention of humanity, because all he had done was to array all the ancient prejudices against free trade under the guise of philanthropy. He had only contended for monopoly in trade under the flag of humanity. Under these circumstances, it was impossible that the noble Lord could confine his resolution to its present subject. He would not go into all the details of the cotton trade, in order to show that we were in the constant habit of receiving the produce of slave-labour, and that it was only in this particular instance, that we were preparing to lay down a maxim hitherto unacknowledged in the commercial legislation of this country. He quite agreed with the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, that this was not a fair question of free trade, but for a different reason. He considered that it was not a fair question of free trade, because the protection retained by his right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was still most considerable. When hon. Gentlemen connected with the West-Indies talked of supporting the exertions of free labour, he begged to ask them what sacrifices they themselves had made for that purpose. He confessed he knew of none. On every occasion when they had appeared before the House, it had been to complain of invasions of their monopolies. In 1807 they cried out that the abolition of the slave trade would be their destruction. At a later period, when it was proposed to admit East-India and

Mauritius sugar, they contended that it would be their ruin. Yet, what was the fact? At this moment they were more prosperous than before emancipation. The reason he had for asserting this was, that the noble Lord, the mover of the resolution now before the House, did, when the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire presented his plan for negro emancipation, propose, that a larger sum than 20,000,000*l.* should be given to the planters, on the ground that, during the twelve years which the apprenticeship would occupy, their annual loss would be 150,000*l.* He would ask now, whether there had been that amount of loss? If it should be so stated, it would be in defiance of every return which had been furnished from the West Indies. The planters had always preferred trusting to their party influence in that House, to exerting themselves in their own islands. The first thing they attempted after the emancipation was the introduction of the hill coolies. He did not mean to deny that that measure might have been made useful. Last year he had done all in his power for the introduction of hill coolies on a small scale, but the attempt of the planters had been made so suddenly, and with such bad management, that it had placed a check on immigration for many a year. When he, last year, had attempted the introduction of free labour, he was constantly taunted with the bad success which the experiment had met with on the estates of Messrs. Colvill and Gladstone. The experiment had failed then, but he trusted the failure would not be permanent. He was still of opinion, that great facilities ought to be given to the West-Indian Islands for the immigration of labourers, because the position in which those islands was placed was completely false. Because the returns before the House showed that the condition of the West-India labourers was higher than it had ever been before. He had already referred to some evidence on this point; and in the report of Mr. Strutt, a special magistrate in Berbice, dated 31st December, 1840, it was stated—

“I frequently saw in a labourer's hall, his neat little sideboard (with glasses &c., thereon), as also a table, chairs, benches, &c.; his bedroom usually contained a good hard wood turned post bedstead, with its proper supply of bedclothes, &c. I lately saw a labourer, when two of his acquaintances called upon

him at noon, place upon table a roasted fowl and two bottles of London porter. We find the number of women and children occupied in agricultural employment to be considerably, I may add, alarmingly diminished. Again, we see that many labourers have purchased lands, built houses, and planted provision grounds; thus rendering themselves independent. These are circumstances at which the philanthropist will rejoice; but the planter must view them with dread and apprehension, for his chances of continuous labour are rendered less certain. In this country the labourer is protected by humane and wholesome laws, liberally paid for the work he performs, comfortably housed, and carefully attended in sickness, whilst his opportunities of acquiring religious and moral instruction are rarely equalled, and certainly not excelled, in any part of her Majesty's possessions. I may add, that hunger and famine are words unknown among us.”

What had been the consequence of the change they had effected? They could not induce the negroes to work. Did he wish to force them by the lash? By no means; but they ought to excite a free-trade in labour all over the world, and so induce them to lend their aid. The West-Indians had endeavoured to force labour by other modes, and they were establishing courts of reconciliation introduced from Norway, which would settle without litigation, questions relating to wages. All these advantages were placing the West-Indian labourers in an improved condition. He knew that he should be asked why, if the labourers were in such a good condition, he would strike at that condition, by importing foreign sugar. He wished not to strike at that condition, but he warned the West-Indian interest that the labourers there were gradually acquiring property for themselves, and that if we do not do something to rouse them to a sense of the value of labour, the country would be divided into small holdings without labourers, and they would soon have to meet one of the most vicious states of society. The negroes had displayed none of those bad qualities which had been ascribed to them; they had shown no disposition to revolt, they had borne with patience all their hardships, and they now bear that state which was still harder to sustain, they bear prosperity without exultation. The people of this country had a right to call upon the negroes to exert themselves on our behalf, as our people had exerted themselves for the sake of the negroes; the people of this country had a right to

say, "Exert yourselves for us as we have done for you; cultivate the sugar which is necessary for us, as we have granted emancipation, which was necessary for you;" and he was sure that a people so enlightened as the negroes would not fail to comply with the request, and a competition with other countries would excite them to a compliance. It has been frequently said, that the effect of opening fresh markets must be to increase the work of the slaves in the Brazils and other slave countries, but they had to choose between the present distressed condition of our own population, and the chances of creating some distress among the negro population of other countries. Over the population in those countries we had no power, and we could have no power except by the influence of our amicable relations; and he would ask the House by what mode our efforts were likely to be attended with the greatest success? He would ask whether we would be most likely to gain the votes of the Brazilian Congress—to them we must appeal—by adopting a system of exclusive dealing, or by opening new sources of industry, and by offering them an opportunity of dealing with us on better terms than they had hitherto done? if we refused to deal with them, we should throw away the certainty of doing great good with the chance of doing no good at all. He agreed that they ought to do all in their power to suppress the slave-trade. The hon. Member for Northumberland had referred to the exertions of Captain Denham, and every day was bringing fresh information of more efficient means used to suppress that trade. Accounts had been received that very day stating that Mr. Capper, by the adoption of a new method of closing the exit from the mouths of rivers by the aid of boats, thought that he should have the power of stopping the slave-trade altogether. Whilst another mode of putting an end to that trade was, by the use of those exertions which had been referred to by the noble Lord the Member for South Lancashire, and repeated by the Member for Oxford—the attempt that had been recently made to promote the civilisation of that portion of Africa. [*Laughter.*] The noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire laughed, but it was not for hon. Gentlemen opposite, who now came forward as such great philanthropists, to laugh at the adoption of this or of any other mode for

the prevention of the slave-trade. He would ask, what principle was laid down in the resolution of the noble Lord? It might be said the principle of humanity. That was a principle which Gentlemen opposite had very suddenly adopted. There was no principle, no statement, in the resolution which would prevent a future Government from acting on the principle to which it professed to be opposed. The only effect it would have, if successful, would be to prevent us at once entering into the question of the Sugar Duties. When he was told by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Beverley, that East-India sugars were coming in in much greater quantities, and therefore it was not necessary to introduce this plan, he would like to know, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had come down to the House and said, that there would be such an increase in the quantities of East-India and of West-India sugars, that he would propose no measure for meeting the existing deficiency, whether he would not have been upbraided as he ought to have been upbraided for leaving such an amount of deficiency unprovided for? He would not enter upon the general question of the principles of free trade, but he conceived that his hon. Friends near him were starting a great principle, which must be intimately involved in their discussions for many years to come. [*Cheers.*] He was glad of those cheers. He meant to elicit them. But he must confess, that anxious as he was to carry these measures at the present moment, that was a matter of comparative indifference to their being placed fairly before the country, that the people might know on which side to range themselves. He was prepared to support his hon. Friends, or any other Minister in bringing forward such measures, so eminently calculated to afford relief to the country. On that part of the question, however, he would not further dwell; but he would conclude by expressing his satisfaction at the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by declaring that he would adhere to those principles under whatever Minister they might be brought forward; and that he should be as proud of recording his vote in their favour, even if he were voting with hon. Gentlemen opposite, as he would ever be in voting in the largest majority of his own Friends.

Lord Stanley: Sir, although I am



aware that, at this period of the night, and after so many nights' debate, it is little likely that I, or any one, should add much either new or interesting to the discussion that has already taken place, yet, perhaps, in consideration of the part which some years ago it was my lot to take upon a subject with which the present is intimately connected, the House will bear with me whilst, as shortly as I can, I state the grounds on which I give my vote in support of the motion of my noble Friend, and in opposition to the plan brought forward by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I say, Sir, the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because I heard, with great surprise, from the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and also from my hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax, whom I do not now see in his place, that we are now discussing some new and perfectly unheard-of principles which have been brought forward for the first time, for the regulation of our commercial affairs, which are to create a revolution in our commercial code, and which the hon. Gentleman, not very sanguinely for his own views, has just informed the House are to be the subject of discussion between the conflicting parties for many years to come. Sir, the hon. Member for Carlisle, who spoke early this evening, said, that, not venturing to meet the Government proposition in front, we met it by what lawyers call a demurrer; that, not venturing to go boldly to trial on the issue, we pleaded certain grounds for not accepting the issue submitted to us. With due respect to the hon. Member for Carlisle, I think there could be no course more directly joining issue with her Majesty's Government than that which we have taken. Her Majesty's Ministers have propounded to us a scheme of policy forming altogether what they are pleased to call a budget, and on the first article of that budget (the chief novelty of which is that it purports to provide for the deficiency of revenue, with the small exception of 700,000*l.*)—on the question of going into committee for the discussion of the first article of that budget—on the first financial proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, by which he hopes to get 700,000*l.*—my noble Friend says—

"I will not go into committee—I refuse to discuss your plan in committee—I reject the motion for going into committee for the purpose of adopting it, and, declaring that I do reject it, I meet you in front, and tell you in the terms of the resolution which I have sub-

mitted to the House the grounds and reasons on which I reject your proposition."

But my hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax, tells us that the question now before the House is, on what principles the commercial code of this country is to be settled, and how the revenue is to be made equal to the expenditure. Sir, this is, of course, an unintentional, but it is a very gross, perversion of the issue before the House, either as relates to the question on which we are about to divide, or to the larger question on which a great portion of this debate has turned. Sir, the question for to-night is, will you or will you not assent to the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for lowering the duty on foreign sugar, in order to raise the sum of 700,000*l.* by that financial operation? I do not complain of hon. Gentlemen opposite for mixing up with this a discussion on a more extended question; I do not complain of the Attorney-general, who tells us that this is part of one great plan, and that we must consider together the financial scheme now proposed with regard to timber, sugar, and corn, as one great plan of her Majesty's Government, of which the various parts must stand or fall together. I do not complain of this, but what I do complain of is—that hon. Gentlemen should tell us that a great principle is involved, by which a line of demarcation is to be drawn between those who vote on the two sides of this question. Now, if that be the case, I should be much obliged to the hon. Member for Halifax, and to the noble Lord who cheers me, if they will go one step further in their revelations, and tell us what this new principle is. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down tells us it is the principle of free trade, and rejoices that upon that principle one and all in this House concur. Now, Sir, I have not heard one word on this side of the House, nor even from the other, except from the hon. Member for London, in support of the doctrines of free trade, if I understand what is meant by the doctrines of free trade, they are simply these—to buy in whatever market you can buy cheapest, to impose no protecting duties, to foster and encourage no one interest rather than another; that whatever duties you are compelled to levy for the purposes of revenue should be as lightly and as equally as possible imposed on all imports, but that, if any difference is to be made, if there is to be any discrimination, the lowest duties shall be levied upon those articles which

are of the most general consumption, and of the most prime necessity. Now, have I fairly stated the principles of free trade? Well, then, if these be the doctrines of free trade, I ask which party in the House, on this occasion, has advocated these doctrines? What approach is made to them in practice by the proposition of her Majesty's Government? Sir, neither party, I am happy to say, has in this discussion been guilty of the absurdities which have been imputed to hon. Gentlemen opposite by their friends, and to us by our opponents. This is not a question between monopoly and competition. I repeat that, as between the principles advocated by the Government and the principles for which we contend, there is no question between monopoly and competition, no question of unrestricted free trade on the one side and prohibition on the other. The noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell) has stated here, and, if I am correctly informed, the noble Lord at the head of the Government has, in another place, also stated, that his object was distinctly and plainly protection. Protection and not free trade is the principle of the Government—protection and not prohibition is the principle on which we on this side of the House are prepared to concur with the Government. But, Sir, if the principle of free trade be, as all appear to agree, inconsistent with the imposition of protecting duties, I ask the noble Lord opposite, and the other Members of her Majesty's Government, how they can put themselves forward to the country as advocates of free trade, and appeal to the country for support as though they had proposed a free trade in corn, in timber, and sugar? As to corn, the noble Lord tells us that he proposes a protecting duty of 8s. a quarter; and though we may question whether that is an adequate protection, or any protection at all, yet the noble Lord concurs with us in principle by distinctly announcing his proposed duty as a protecting duty. Then the noble Lord has announced himself as a free trader in timber. But what is he about to do? Not only does he keep up the duty between Baltic and Canadian timber (which discriminating duty may be too high or too low), but the noble Lord as a free trader goes one step further, and on an article of general consumption, and which by the laws of free trade ought to be especially exempted, the noble Lord imposes an additional duty of 100 per cent. [*"Hear, hear," from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.*]

Now, does the Chancellor of the Exchequer by that cheer mean to taunt me with the fact, that his measure is the same as that proposed by the Government of Lord Althorp, of which I was a Member? Sir, at the time when Lord Althorp proposed that budget to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred, he was making a great and general alteration and reduction of taxes; and, a necessity arising of providing for the requisite amount of revenue, Lord Althorp did propose in the first instance to add 10s. to the existing duty on Canadian timber, though, upon subsequent consideration, he withdrew the proposition. Lord Althorp, when that course was no longer necessary for the purposes of revenue, [*"Hear," from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.*] came forward and said, "I will still diminish the discriminating duty between Baltic and Canadian timber, but I will do it by a larger reduction on the Baltic, and by making no addition to the duties on Canadian timber." Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who cheered me when I said, "for the purposes of revenue," admit that he sacrifices his principle of free trade for the purposes of revenue? I don't complain of him for doing so; I don't blame him for doing so; I express no opinion whether circumstances may justify him in doing so or not; but I say that he has no right to take such a step for the purpose of revenue; he has no right to impose such a heavy duty on an article entering so largely into consumption in this country, and of such prime necessity, and at the same time challenge for himself and the Government support on the ground of his advocacy of free-trade doctrines. Let me now take the other article of sugar, which is more immediately under the consideration of the House. What is the proposal which my noble Friend opposite has put forth to the country as grounded on the principles of free-trade; that free-trade which requires the abolition of all protecting duties, and the maxim of which is to diminish to the lowest amount all revenue duties on those articles which enter the most largely into general consumption? What is this proposition which the free-traders are required to laud so highly, and for which the consumer is to be so grateful? Why, merely this, the noble Lord proposes to relieve the distresses of the people by a reduction of the discriminating duty to the extent of about six-tenths of a farthing in the pound, while he not only leaves on a

discriminating duty still, but also leaves untouched the whole of the duty levied alike on British and foreign sugar for the purposes of revenue, amounting to a tax, upon an article of universal consumption, of about 100 per cent. Again I say, the noble Lord may be right; again I say, the necessities of the revenue may compel him to take that course; but when he talks about upholding the principles of free-trade, which he is to carry out with a simplicity and a purity that are to be the wonder of all succeeding times, and an example to all future Governments—I say, that the continuance by him of such heavy import duties on articles of such general consumption, and of such prime necessity is in utter contradiction to his pretensions, and must deprive him of that character of the champion of free-trade, which he and others for him have been so anxious to assume. The right hon. the President of the Board of Trade, the other night stated, that he relied on the authority of Mr. Huskisson. Sir, I had for a short time, for too short a time, the honour of acting in confidential communication with Mr. Huskisson, and to his opinions and authority on commercial subjects I look with as sincere respect as can my right hon. Friend, or any Gentleman on the other side of the House. But, Sir, what were the doctrines of Mr. Huskisson? Were they the doctrines of free-trade on the one hand, or of monopoly on the other? They were neither. They were the doctrines of common sense. [*Ministerial cheers re-echoed from the Opposition.*] Yes, they were the doctrines of common sense, for they were the doctrines of competition, checked, limited, and regulated by protection. [*Cheers from the Opposition and Ministerial Benches.*] I am happy to receive those cheers from hon. Gentlemen opposite, because what I have especially endeavoured to establish is, that the plan we are now discussing does not involve a new principle which must draw a line of demarcation impossible to be passed by one side or the other. I say, that I adopt to the full extent Mr. Huskisson's principles; namely, that protection shall be substituted for prohibition; and I am ready to go further, and to state as a commercial axiom, that the amount of protection should be the minimum required to give a fair encouragement to the home producer, and which shall at the same time admit foreign competition as a check upon the evils and abuses of a monopoly in his hands. Well, then, we are agreed in our principle;

but the difficulty is to ascertain the point at which protection becomes real instead of nominal; and where, on the other hand, it would cease to be protection, and become prohibition. This is a practical question. It is not a matter of principle; it is a matter of examination and calculation, to be judged of in every case according to the specific circumstances of the case, on which no certain rule can be laid down, to which no inflexible principle can be applied. It is, and it must be, a matter of practice only, to ascertain the point at which protection may merge into prohibition, or, on the other hand, dwindle down till it becomes no protection at all. There is no principle, therefore, to divide Gentlemen on one side of the House from the other, because each case must stand on its own peculiar merits, and the peculiar circumstances in which it is placed, in a very highly artificial state of society. Now, with regard to the protection that should be given to agricultural produce, as compared with the productions of manufacturing industry, it must be manifest that this question must be considered with reference to the very different circumstances of the two occupations. I admit the principle that the minimum amount of protection shall be given to the home producer, so that he shall not enjoy a monopoly, but simply a fair protection; and I will proceed to apply that principle to our manufacturing and agricultural industry. Now, consider the very different circumstances of the two cases. The manufacturer has the power of selecting his own locality, of employing his capital in that part of the country in which, from various circumstances, his trade can be most cheaply and advantageously conducted. Within that locality the manufacturer can extend his production to an amount limited, not by the space which he occupies, but only by the powers of consumption to absorb his produce; and, with respect to those manufactures into which machinery enters more largely than human labour, he can calculate with great precision what will be the prime cost of the article he produces, and on what terms he can meet the competition of his foreign rivals. With the agricultural producer the case is much more complicated and more difficult. Spread over the whole surface of the country, subject to the influence of various soils of different qualities, which he can neither forsake nor alter—depending altogether, or nearly altogether, on manual labour—after he has

expended all his toil—after he has applied his best skill and art—after he has employed the best means for draining his land—adopted the most effectual rotation of crops—made the best selection of seed—conducted the business of his farm with the most unremitting diligence—the issue of his toil is not in his own hands, for it depends on a higher power. The sun and the rain, the wind and the storm, the various temperatures of the atmosphere (those temperatures which the manufacturer has the power to create for himself, and adapt to the peculiar fabric intended to be produced)—none of these are within the control of the agriculturist, who must of necessity endure greater uncertainty and meet with greater fluctuations in the amount and value of his production, whatever be the amount of capital, labour, and industry devoted to it. In applying, therefore, to the agriculturist the same principle which you apply to the manufacturer, you must make allowance for all these various alterations of seasons—you must make allowance for all the different circumstances under which he is called on to compete with the foreign producer—and you must do so in some mode which shall in some degree apportion the protection to the necessity for it arising out of these vicissitudes. Sir, this is a very complicated and abstruse question. I do not pretend to be very deeply skilled in its particular details, but I know enough of it to be aware of the magnitude of the difficulties which surround it, and of the extreme circumspection with which the House ought to approach a question of such awful and vital importance. But, Sir, I must go further; and, admitting the general principle laid down, on which there is no dispute between us and hon. Gentlemen opposite, I say there are certain manufactures which must be taken out of the range of, and must form an exception to, those general principles of commerce to which I have adverted. In the infancy of a manufacture which it is thought necessary to foster, you may only be able to do so by the imposition of higher protecting duties in its favour than you would permit if it were more matured, and better able to encounter competition. And I say, Sir, on the ground of this analogy, the sugar trade does require for its protection that it should be taken out of the range of the ordinary commercial rule, and that, for the present, prohibition should be substituted for protection. I will endeavour to lay before

the House the grounds on which I have arrived at this conclusion. It is extremely difficult to analyse and unravel the various reasons alleged in favour of the proposition of her Majesty's Government by various Members of that Government and by hon. Gentlemen who have supported them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer tells you that he recommends it to your notice because it will enable him to raise a certain amount of revenue without injuring the colonial interest. The noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies said, it would effect a vast reduction of price in favour of the poor consumer, whose means were inadequate to the present high price of sugar, although in the very next breath the noble Lord said that this reduction, which was to place sugar within the reach of those who were before unable to obtain it, would amount only to 1s. 6d. per cwt., or somewhere about half a farthing a pound. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade says, the object of Government is to foster our commercial intercourse with Brazil, but not to encourage the Slave-trade. When we say that this commerce will conduce to the encouragement of slavery, he says that we now take away the sugar of that country, and by so doing encourage the Slave-trade, if fostering the commerce with Brazil will do so. If, then, Sir, we do now, by taking the sugar of that country, and disposing of it in other markets, encourage the production and commerce of Brazil to as great an extent as by the proposed measure, I want to know what becomes of the boon we are about to confer on Brazil? The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer calculates on producing an increase in the revenue, but I cannot help wishing the right hon. Gentleman had been a little more communicative as to the grounds on which he founded his estimate. His calculation must be made on one of two principles—either on the supposition of a large increase in the consumption of sugar beyond the possible supply from the British colonies, or, if the consumption remains the same, by the substitution of foreign sugar, at the higher rate of duty, for that which is the produce of our own colonies. The right hon. Gentleman has not let the House into the secret of his calculations, and my hon. Friend the Member for Halifax, suffering and distressed at his silence, said to us in his speech of last night,

“ Oh, I will give you an easy solution of the matter. If sugar should fall as low as 50s.

or 59s. per cwt., and if the consumption bears the same proportion to the population as it did in 1831, this will give an increase to the revenue of 900,000*l.*, at the present duty of 24s."

But, Sir, if that effect be produced, it is not owing to the plan announced by the right hon. Gentleman's budget. It will be produced by doing that for recommending which, in respect to sugar, my right hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge was so unfairly taunted last night, namely, by sitting still and doing nothing. The effect will be produced by the natural lowering of the price, and the consequent increase of consumption and of the revenue—not by the plan of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but by the natural results of the increased productiveness of the East and West Indies. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman calculates on an increased consumption beyond the production of the East and West Indies. The right hon. Gentleman makes no sign, and therefore, though I am unwilling to trouble the House at this hour, I must recur to a small number of figures, in order to inquire into the probability of the right hon. Gentleman's expectations of increasing the revenue, according to either of the calculations on which he may choose to rely. My hon. Friend the Member for Halifax stated, that if the price be 58s. it ought to produce an increase to the revenue, by increased consumption, of 900,000*l.* Now, the noble Lord opposite estimates the probable price for the year at 60s. or 61s. and that below this price Brazilian sugar will not come in. I look back, therefore, to former years, in which the price approached most nearly to the present estimate, and I find that in the four years beginning in 1821 the average consumption, the price being 59s. 2*d.* per cwt., was about 158,029 tons. In the four years commencing with 1826 the price was 58s. 8*d.*, and the average consumption 175,700 tons. In the years succeeding 1831 the duty was 3*s.* lower, but the duty-paid price in these years was 51*s.* 7*d.*, nearly 10*s.* lower than the present price, and the average consumption was 185,373 tons. In the years 1837 and 1838—and since those years I presume the right hon. Gentleman cannot estimate the population to have increased to any extent which can materially affect the consumption of sugar—in these two years the price was 58s. 1*d.* per cwt., more than 2*s.* lower than at present, and the average consumption in each of the two years was 196,611 tons.

Now, Sir, I will assume a lower price than that which has been estimated by the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman. I shall suppose the price to be only 57*s.* or 58*s.*; and even at this calculation, I fearlessly ask the House, have they any reason to estimate a larger consumption during the next year than 195,000 or 200,000 tons? Have they any reason whatever for thinking that the sugar produced by our own possessions will not exceed this quantity? The only person whom I have heard express any doubt on this matter is the hon. Member for Carlisle, whom I do not now see in his place. But that which the hon. Gentleman doubts is not matter of theory or calculation, but of fact and demonstration. The hon. Gentleman says, he cannot believe, that the Mauritius can supply more than 26,000 tons. The hon. Gentleman who so ably seconded the motion of my noble Friend the Member for Liverpool, has estimated the supply from that place for the next year at 30,000 tons; and my noble Friend himself (Lord Sandon) estimates it at 40,000 tons. And Sir, since the night when my noble Friend spoke, I have had placed in my hands a letter written at the Mauritius by the correspondent of a house well known, I believe, to her Majesty's Government, I mean Messrs. Aikin of Liverpool. This letter is dated the 13th of January, 1841. It states,—

"There are 30,000 tons of sugar exported up to this day, and we expect that there is about the same quantity yet to export."

Sir, this is the last statement we have from the spot itself; and surely, looking at the facts which it tells, there can be no exaggeration in estimating the probable exports at the lowest at 30,000 tons. It is a statement which could not by possibility have had any contemplation of the measure now before the House—a statement made at a time when no human being in the Mauritius could have been aware of the intention of the Government, if, indeed, the Government were aware of it themselves. So much with respect to the produce of the Mauritius. But, Sir, the hon. Member for Carlisle also throws doubt on the probability of the West Indies supplying 115,000 tons. He tells us it is impossible; and why? Because, he says, he was greatly struck, in the year 1835, with the judgment, sagacity, and foresight of a speech made by my right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth, in which he said

that the first effects of the emancipation of the negroes would be greatly to diminish the produce; and that the negroes, freed from their compulsory toil, would naturally at the first transition, betake themselves to the ease and indolence which would be placed within their reach. This, Sir, is the ground on which the hon. Member for Carlisle declares that 115,000 tons cannot come in from the West-Indies. But, Sir, 110,000 tons came in last year. This may appear incredible to the hon. Member, but it is a fact certified beyond the possibility of doubt; and no man acquainted with the condition of the West-Indies entertains the least doubt that next year's crop will materially exceed the very deficient produce of the last. I beg pardon of the House for entering into these details, but it is of the very essence of our inquiry that we should ascertain whether we may fairly reckon on obtaining from our own colonies a supply of sugar sufficient to meet the consumption calculated on by the noble Lord. The hon. Member for Carlisle goes on and says,—

“I have been reading a work on the subject, and I have had a conversation with a well-informed gentleman regarding the valley of the Ganges, and the mode of sugar cultivation in India, and all I can say is, that we never have yet got more than 28,000 tons from that quarter.”

This is what the hon. Member says; but, Sir, I have in my hand a document, I believe of authority, Cook's Circular, and on referring to it I find it stated that, up to the 31st of January in the present year, 58,300 tons had actually been shipped from Calcutta, of which 50,000 have arrived; and that the total crop cannot be estimated at less than 60,000 tons. In estimating the amount of supply I exclude from my calculation an amount promised us from an unexpected quarter by the hon. Member for Athlone, which I must attribute to a geographical error on the part of the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Gentleman informed the House that we were to receive 6,000 tons of sugar from China, and he then expatiated upon the great advantages which our trade and manufactures would derive from commercial intercourse with the vast population of that empire, so liberal and so free from restrictions in its dealings with other countries. The hon. Member dwelt on the opening which was given to our manufactures, as the first fruits of this instalment of 6,000 tons of sugar. The hon. Gentleman, I presume,

confounded China with Cochin China; as from Siam, Manilla, Cochin China, and the adjoining districts, we shall probably have the supply which we usually have had. But, Sir, from the plain statements which I have submitted to the House, it is evident that we shall have from the West-Indies a supply of 115,000 tons; from the Mauritius, at least 30,000 tons; and a supply of from 60,000 to 70,000 tons from the East-Indies. This amounts to 205,000 or 210,000 tons, and (though perhaps it is not fair to calculate this here) we have 35,000 tons in bond; that is to say, taking all together, we have from British colonies a supply of from 240,000 to 260,000 tons of sugar, to meet a consumption which can by no possibility exceed 200,000 tons. To return to the calculations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. If, under these circumstances, he calculates on making up the deficiency in the revenue by the introduction of foreign sugar, he must make up the deficiency by substituting foreign slave-produced sugar for sugar produced by free labour in the British colonies. In other words, to make up his estimate, he must admit 1,100,000 cwt. of foreign slave-grown sugar to the exclusion of British. Sir, I have a right to ask the right hon. Gentleman, the country has a right to ask him, upon which of the two principles it is he founds his financial calculations? In either case he is in a dilemma. Either he inflicts no injury upon the British colonies, and then his financial project fails, or it succeeds, and he inflicts ruin on the British free produce, while he confers a benefit on the foreign slave-grown. He must either fail in the calculations of his budget, or inflict a deadly injury on the British colonies in favour of foreign slave produce. The noble Lord opposite estimates the price for the year at 60s. per cwt., and he says the Brazilian sugar will not come in at that price; but how if the noble Lord and the Chancellor of the Exchequer should have made some little miscalculations on this point? Some very ominous words fell from my hon. Friend the Judge Advocate, about 60s. being the minimum at which Brazilian sugar could come into the market. He seemed to think, it might come in, even if the price was only 56s. or 57s. Now, this difference between 60s. and 56s. or 57s. may make all the difference as to fairness of competition between the foreign and colonial sugar; and with this difference, too,

that, come what may, the colonial article has no other market to go to, because, under any circumstances, it can be disposed of here at a less loss than in any other market in Europe. Here, then, it must be sold even though at a ruinous loss. Your protecting duties, then, not being sufficient, what will be the consequence? The effect must be, that the cultivation of sugar in the West Indies will be abandoned; that in the East it will be greatly diminished; those countries will be reduced to a state which will deprive you of the grand advantage of their immense market for your own manufactures. And the article which you could procure in abundance from your own colonies you supply with slave-grown foreign produce, with which that produced by free labour in the British colonies cannot long compete. Sir, I think that at such a time as this, at all events, the House is not prepared to take such a step. I say at such a time as this, because at the present period we are in the progress of a great and awful experiment, in which the fortunes and happiness of millions of our fellow-beings are involved. Other countries are looking on, not ready, perhaps, to follow your example if you succeed, but ready to scorn your folly and profit by your mistakes, if by your mismanagement you should fail. Sir, I confess, however highly I may regard the importance of the argument on this question as it may bear on slavery, I cannot place it so high as it has been placed, I am sure in all sincerity, by my hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford, or as it was placed last year by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin. Sir, I have heard, but I can hardly believe the report, that that learned Gentleman intends, on this occasion, to support the proposition of her Majesty's Government. Sir, I listened with some surprise when the hon. and learned Member gave notice the other night of a resolution to carry into effect that which he knows to be impossible, namely, to limit the operation of the measure relating to foreign sugar in such a way as to exclude any article which is slave-grown. I am sorry the hon. and learned Gentleman is not in his place, and we seldom have the advantage of his presence in the course of debates; but he will doubtless hear of what I am about to say. Let not the hon. Gentleman go to the division with the plea, or under the idea, that he can, in committee, separate the free grown from the slave-grown sugar.

Whether such a resolution could in point of form be moved in committee I doubt; and the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, will tell him, that neither in committee nor elsewhere could it be carried, nor, if carried, acted upon, inasmuch as solemn treaties compel us to admit the produce of Brazil upon the same footing, and with the same advantages, as that of the most favoured country. The distinction is one he cannot maintain, and if he vote for the proposition of the Government he will be substantially giving a vote for the introduction into this country of foreign slave-grown sugar. Sir, on the 25th of June in the last year, on a motion of the hon. Member for Wigan, which was identically the same proposition now introduced by the Government, but which was then opposed by them, and by him—on that occasion the hon. and learned Member, in opposing the motion of the hon. Member for Wigan, said, that

“He never gave a vote with a greater conviction of its propriety than the vote he should give against the motion of the hon. Member for Wigan. He thought the motion did not go far enough. The hon. Member ought to bring in a bill to repeal the Slavery Emancipation Act. They sent, at a great expense, a naval force to the coast of Africa to watch the transportation of slaves, and, if possible, to prevent it; but if the slavers unfortunately evaded the watchfulness of the cruisers, what was it proposed to do? They held out a bribe to the slavers the moment they arrived in the Brazils, by purchasing the sugar grown there by the labour of those very slaves. This was a most absurd outrage to common sense.”

The hon. and learned Member went on to say, that he did not care whether sugar was a halfpenny or a penny a pound cheaper or dearer; he would put it to the people of England whether or not they would have slavery with cheap sugar, and he had no fear what the answer would be. Sir, neither do I fear for the result. But what will England, and what will Ireland, think of the man who made that speech last year, and who now votes for the proposition of Government? Sir, I do not mean to dispute the financial statements which the Government have made; but this I must say, that upon any other ground than that of the financial difficulty into which they have plunged the country—and from which they know not how to extricate it—upon any other ground than this, I can see no excuse or palliation for their having adopted the course which they pursued last year, and this year taking the

present course. What was the state of things, then, at the time the motion of the hon. Member for Wigan was negatived? What was the price of sugar at that period? What was the amount of the pressure on the consumers as compared with what it is at present? When the motion of the hon. Member for Wigan was negatived, the price of sugar was 56s. to 57s. the cwt. Since then, it has fallen upwards of 20s. the cwt., and it is now about 37s., I believe. [*Cheers.*] I see marks of dissent on the part of the noble Lord opposite; I refer, then, to the paper which has been furnished us by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, from which I find that the average prices of Muscovado sugar, as given in the "*London Gazette*," were, in January, 1840, 37s. 11½d. From that period it rose to 39s. 6d., to 43s. 2d., to 46s. 5d., and so on, until, in July of the same year, it reached 56s. 10½d., then 57s. 3½d., and finally, in September, attained its maximum of 58s. 3½d. At this quotation it was at a monopoly price, and the prohibitory duties on foreign sugar, I admit, were prohibitory no longer. It was in the end of June, or the beginning of July, that the hon. Member for Wigan made his motion on the subject of foreign sugar. The prices then fell, as gradually as they rose, to 57s. 6d., 56s. 4d., 54s. 2d., 50s., 40s., and so on, until, in the April of the present year, they were quoted at 37s. 1½d. But they fell still further, for at the commencement of this discussion they stood at 36s. 1d. as the market price, and I have been told that since and during the debate, within the last few days, they have again risen to the amount of about 1s. Therefore, when I say that the pressure upon the consumer at the time the hon. Member for Wigan made his motion was the quotation price of 56s., with the prospect of a rise, and that a gradual decrease has since taken place equal to about 2d. in the pound, my argument is this—if the consumer in this country would not, when sugar was at more than 7d. per pound, consent to purchase it, at a reduced price, because of the facilities and encouragement the introduction of foreign sugar into the British market obviously gave to the slave-trade and slavery, how can it be expected that the people of England will now, when no pressure is felt, when no necessity exists, sacrifice the great cause of emancipation—a cause which was not that of Lord Grey's Government, or of any other Government or party, but which was the

cause of the English nation, and of humanity? I have said, Sir, that I would not place the question of slavery on the same high ground as my hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford, or the hon. and learned Member for the city of Dublin; and I see great indignation has been manifested at the other side of the House, and much anger evinced, because my noble Friend (Lord Sandon) has brought forward a plain, practical view of the case in his amendment, wisely avoiding the assertion of vague and abstract opinions, which, as a man of sense and experience, he well knew he could not carry into effect. Hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House say, "Oh, you object to receive Brazilian sugar because it is slave-grown. Why, then, not pledge yourselves also not to consume any other product of slave-labour in any other country?" I answer freely—because by so doing we should insultate ourselves—because by so doing we should cease to be a commercial nation—because there is scarcely an article of general consumption which is not connected, directly or indirectly with the production of slave-labour. Sir, if we had adopted this suggestion—if we had laid down such a doctrine as this—if we had followed such a course, it would, without doubt, have been greatly for the advantage of hon. Gentlemen opposite, inasmuch as it would have given them an opportunity of pointing out the absurdity of our conduct, as well as the pernicious consequences that would accrue from it, and under cover of this argument they might have escaped from the discussion of the principle at issue. But I say this, that, while I pledge myself to no abstract principles—principles which, by reason of their abstract nature, no man of common sense could ever hope to carry into effect—I may be permitted to say, that I should view with extreme regret, and regard as a great national calamity, any determination which, needlessly, without the pressure of absolute vital necessity, overwhelming all considerations but those of national interest or national existence, should be taken by this country to follow out the principle propounded by the Under Secretary for the Colonies, who said, that as far as we were concerned, we had done with the question of slavery and the slave-trade, and that all our obligations on that score were at an end. Sir, I repudiate altogether this doctrine of the hon. Gentleman. We have performed our own part, it is true, at a sacrifice for which the



people of England cannot be too highly honoured and estimated—a sacrifice which in furtherance of the will of the nation, it was my duty, as the organ of Lord Grey's Government, to call on them to make; and it would little become them, therefore, and least of all would it become me, to propose to them now, or even to assent to, any measure which has for its effect the destruction of that splendid experiment in favour of humanity, to prove to the world that it was a lamentable failure—to rivet still faster the chains of the suffering slave—or to encourage the perpetration anew, in their most aggravated features, of the horrors of the slave-trade. But you do all these things, you give all this encouragement in admitting the slave-grown sugar of Brazil. I will say nothing now of the sugar of Cuba, I will not press on the House that point at present, or argue, that by your present scale of duties you will be encouraging the produce, not of the milder slavery of Brazil, but of that country in which slavery and the slave-trade exist in their most atrocious and unmitigated form. But when we have a vast market in our own possession—a market where we are always sure of finding a sufficient supply raised by free labour, and our own colonists, at a reasonable price; I will not consent to patch up the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer by giving admission to the slave-grown sugar of Brazil, and thus giving a direct encouragement to slavery. "But," say hon. Gentlemen opposite, "you give encouragement to slavery already; your merchants have always purchased Brazilian and slave-grown sugar in other places, and sold it in the ports of the continent;" and they add, "You even export it from this country, because it is admitted free for refining, and in that state is transhipped to other countries." The right hon. Gentleman opposite said, that was encouragement enough in all conscience; and my hon. Friend the Member for Halifax was pleased to say, that he defied all my ingenuity, (so he termed it), to draw any distinction, or point out any difference between the admission of slave-grown sugar for the purpose of refining, and its admission, refined or unrefined, for home consumption. Now, this is my answer to that argument. I will ask my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer if we import a 1,000,000 cwt. of slave-grown sugar, and thereby displace a 1,000,000 cwt. of free-grown sugar, do we not give, by that amount, encourage-

ment to slavery? He will not deny that fact. This admitted, I will ask him if, by refining the sugar of Brazil for exportation, keeping none of it for our own use, but merely manufacturing it for the use of others, we encourage the growth of a single pound weight of it? Again, as to the carrying trade, the case stands thus: we export our manufactures to the Brazils, and receive in exchange their sugars, which we carry to a third port, where we again exchange them for the produce of that country, to be imported into England. Now, suppose we did not go to Brazil for it at all, but, carrying on our commerce at the third port, receive their produce direct, while our goods were exchanged by them with Brazil for the sugar which they required. I ask what difference there is in the two cases, except that we lose the carrying trade? I ask in what way, in the one case more than in the other, do we encourage the production of slave-grown sugar? We are but carriers and refiners for other nations; how, then, can we be said to encourage it? If we did not carry it, the same sugar, to the same amount would be carried by other maritime nations: if we did not refine it, it would be refined in Holland. We furnish by carrying and refining Brazil sugar no new market for the product of slave-labour. We give by these operations no additional stimulus to the slave trade. Now, Sir, I say again, that the same argument, to a certain extent, applies to the production of coffee and cotton the produce of slave-labour. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have asked, why import slave-grown cotton and coffee more than slave-grown sugar? I will tell them frankly: because our own supply of these articles from free labour is insufficient. But I will tell you more,—I will tell you that, if by any fair means you cannot encourage the growth of both in slave-states, for every additional pound weight you are furnished with you give a cogent and effective check to slavery, and diminish in the same degree the slave-trade. Coffee and cotton do not require the same attention on the part of the planter, the severe, and, above all, the continuous exertion on the part of the slave, that sugar does; they are commodities raised with little care and with little capital; commodities, in short, in regard to which free labour may successfully compete with slave-labour. But free sugar can never, except under the most favourable circumstances, compete with slave-sugar; especially with the produce of such slave-

labour as is exacted in Cuba. Therefore I say that, though coffee and cotton be the product of slave-labour, the greater encouragement you give to their cultivation—the wider you extend it—the larger is your demand for them, to the discouragement of the cultivation of slave-sugar; the greater is the impulse you give to the abolition of slavery and the slave-trade in slave countries. Sir, I have said, that at the present time, and under existing circumstances, it is especially undesirable to disturb the great experiment of emancipation at present going on; and the speech of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, furnishes me with the most powerful argument on this head. What is the state of the negro population at present? It was impossible not to bear with the greatest satisfaction and delight, the glowing account given by the noble Lord of the condition of the coloured race in the West Indies—of the happiness of the negroes—of their increased and increasing prosperity. The experiment has succeeded, according to the statement of the noble Lord, even beyond the most sanguine expectation of its supporters. The noble Lord tells you that they have not only increased in comforts, but that they have purchased small freeholds in many cases—that they appreciate the great change that has taken place—that marriages are becoming more frequent; and (which is a most important feature in the elements of their prosperity, if you will only have a little patience) that their population is rapidly augmenting. He told us that in Jamaica alone there were 90,000 predial labourers employed in the cultivation of sugar, all free men, and that they divided among them, in the shape of wages, 1,750,000*l.* in the year. Is this, Sir, a state of things to meddle with?—is the House justified in breaking in upon this happiness and prosperity?—and for what? For the encouragement of slavery in other countries. To what do the negroes owe this state of things—a state of things to be envied by the labourers of any nation on earth as far as comfort, happiness, and independence are concerned? They owe it entirely to the encouragement given to the staple produce of the West Indies sugar by this country—they owe it to the home market, without which they would soon cease to be an exporting country. I say nothing, Sir, of the hundred millions of British capital invested in the cultivation of sugar in those islands, and in the machinery for preparing it. I say no-

thing of the twenty millions paid directly by this country, or of the millions more which Hon. Gentlemen say have been indirectly paid for the abolition of colonial slavery. I say nothing of the ruin certain to be wrought to our fellow-countrymen, the colonists, by the admission of foreign slave-grown sugar; but I ask the House to put the question on this footing alone—to look at the condition of the negroes, as described by the noble Lord, their happiness and their prosperity; to bear in mind, then, that all these depend upon the wages they get; to remember, next, that their wages are only to be obtained by your exclusive market for their produce—and, having done this, to ask themselves whether the present is the moment you will choose to sacrifice that staple produce of the West Indies, and with it the producers, by admitting slave-grown sugar to the unequal competition with that raised from free labour, and depriving the negro of those wages which he had learned to value, and which, while they amply repay him for his labour, encourage and keep alive his new-born habits of voluntary exertion and honest industry? My right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, speaks of the mercantile distress of the country. Far be it from me, Sir, to undervalue his statements on that subject, or extenuate the impression he desired to make on the House—far be it from me, Sir, to attempt to interpose, by word or deed, between mercantile enterprise and any new channels which her Majesty's Government see fit to open to it. But I would beg the right hon. Gentleman to consider, before he proceeds any farther in his projects, whether, in what he proposes, he really confers a benefit upon commerce—whether, in opening one new channel, he does not dam up and choke many old channels—whether, in short, he does not, in pursuit of his phantom advantage, shut out from that interest sources of intercourse liable to no caprice of other nations—liable to no war—liable to no interruption of friendship—whether, in short, he does not shut out our own colonies and our own fellow-countrymen, in advancing whose prosperity we best advance the prosperity of the mother-country and its inhabitants? My right hon. Friend talked in glowing language of the rich plains and wide rivers of Brazil—of the boundless resources and the incalculable national wealth of that vast continent; but he seemed to forget that at the other side of the globe there

was another continent peopled with millions of fellow-subjects of our own—he forgot that the Valley of the Ganges was the source of inexhaustible supplies—he forgot that India was a new market for our produce—he forgot her rivers, ample as those of any country in the world; her extent of sea-coast,—he forgot the entrance by the Indus, so recently explored, to the innumerable tribes of the north and north-west; to the inmost recesses of Central Asia—he forgot that there was a land teeming with population; a population which, even now, imports more produce from England than goes to Brazil; a population whose capacity to deal with us is only limited by the want of proper means of remittance, a means which is now furnished in the most commodious form by the establishment of the trade in sugar—he forgot all this; and at a moment when British capital is embarked in that trade to a very large amount, and when, if allowed to go on, the Judge Advocate admits that in future years you will have an inexhaustible supply, he proposes to sacrifice these inestimable advantages, and then boasts of the encouragement he has given to our manufactures, by opening new sources of commerce to our mercantile speculations. Will you take advantage of the present state of things in India, and, under the plea of benefiting industry, destroy the rising prosperity of that country, from which, remember, you may obtain a supply to an extent that is impossible to be calculated, by giving entrance to Brazilian sugar, slave-grown, in the market? I give my right hon. Friend credit for the ability with which he made his statement—I give him credit for much more; for the effect produced on the House by his candour, and the obvious sincerity that pervaded his statement—a sincerity which I believe was quite real, because I believe he was firmly convinced of his own facts, and because I know his honourable mind too well to suspect for a moment that he would propose anything to this House which he did not fully conceive was for the benefit of the country. But I must say, with every respect for him, that, however highly I may estimate the commerce of this country with Brazil, my right hon. Friend takes a one-sided view of the advantages to be derived to this country, if, for the sake of encouraging it, he consigns to destruction our trade with the West-Indies, and annihilates our trade with the East-Indies, in so far as sugar is concerned—a trade esta-

blished under such favourable auspices, and so rapidly advancing in prosperity. The right hon. Gentleman talks of our financial and our commercial crises. I do not deny them; but I do deny, as he would seem to suggest, that the springs of our national prosperity are so far relaxed as to be incapable of recovering their elasticity: We have before us, in figures, an annually increasing revenue; no doubt, we have an annually increasing expenditure to exceed it. But, when the right hon. Gentleman talks despondingly of a commercial crisis, I ask the House and her Majesty's Government to look to the unsettled state of commerce in America for an explanation of it—to look to our recently disturbed relations with that country, I will not say now by whom caused, but which, so long as they continue, must cramp our commercial relations with our best customers—to look to the uncertain state of the East—to the unsettled condition of Syria, to the troubled state of our Indian empire, to the loss of three millions to our merchants in the shape of opium seized at Canton—to the far from amicable state of our relations with China. Under all these circumstances I ask them, or rather the House and the country, whether or not there has not been some reason for a falling-off in trading—for a decline in the activity of commerce—for a temporary commercial despondency? But I do not despair of our resources, nor that the finances of the country will recover—always under a due, prudent, and proper administration of them. When I look back, and see, in the course of the last six years, a revenue increased by some two millions—a constantly increasing revenue—and when I find in the first year a surplus of 1,600,000*l.*, and in the last a deficit of 2,400,000*l.*—when I find that for five continuous years there has been an increasing deficiency on the whole of that period—a deficiency amounting, at the end of five years, in the whole, to seven millions, or thereabouts; when I see that a great portion of that deficiency in the present year is to be accounted for by the expenditure incurred on account of Canada—by the expenditure incurred on account of China; when I see that a moment of great financial difficulty was the time selected by her Majesty's Government for taking off a tax which produced, without injury or pressure on the people, a revenue amounting to 1,600,000*l.*, when, I say, in these three items I can trace the whole amount of the deficiency of the present year, I may

be excused if I entertain some doubts of the capacity of those who have involved us in these difficulties. My hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax, I think it was, who said, that whatever Government might succeed the present, whatever might be the result of the present proposal, or whatever the issue of these debates, the seed was sown which would produce its fruit in due time. Sir, I fear that the seed is sown which will produce a bitter fruit; and I deeply regret that at the moment when the Government feel themselves tottering to their fall, when the financial difficulties of the country, to say the least of them, are most serious; when, I will not say county by county, but borough by borough, they see their hold upon the country gradually slipping away from them; that at that moment, when the common consent of the country proclaims (whatever may be the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite) that they can no longer hold the reins of office, as they have long since ceased to hold the reins of power; I regret, I say, that this should be the time chosen by her Majesty's Government for throwing loose upon the country a crude and undigested scheme, involving the most extensive financial regulations, deeply affecting every interest in the country, paralysing for the time all speculations in trade and all activity of commerce; and this under the full conviction that it was impossible they would be able to carry the project into effect. The hon. Member for Carlisle, produced the authority of another speech of my right hon. Friend's, also delivered in 1833, in which my right hon. Friend enunciated the proposition then, and till of late years, very true, that a great and important political measure, under the sanction of her Majesty's name, and with the responsibility of her Majesty's advisers, was all but carried in the very announcement, and in the end all but certain of success. That principle, as laid down by my right hon. Friend, was, as far as all Parliamentary experience then went, perfectly true. But we have profited much by experience since, and have learned that a proposition may be brought forward with all the weight and authority of her Majesty's Government—a proposition to which they may have tied themselves as a government, and on which they may have pledged their very existence, and we have learned to know that, even with that support, the ultimate adoption of the proposition was not so certain as it used to be in former years. And

not this House alone, but the commercial, manufacturing, and agricultural community, have of late learned this lesson. I hold in my hand a paper wholly unconnected with politics, a plain matter-of-fact paper, the "Price Current" of Liverpool, dated Tuesday, the 11th of May, 1841, containing the following commercial view of this amazing scheme, this new principle, which is to be developed and carried into effect by her Majesty's Government. It is signed by two gentlemen, one a warm Conservative, the other a warm supporter of the Government;—so much for its impartiality—and at the end of it, under the head of "Corn," are these words:—

"Sir,—Since the development of the Ministerial plan, the bare allusion to which excited such a panic in the trade, the market has become much calmer."

I have omitted a parenthesis after the word "market," assigning the reason for this sudden calm; and what does the House suppose it is? That, the Government having taken up the matter, all doubts of its success were removed, and mercantile men might safely regard the project as already carried? Far from it, Sir. The reason assigned is in these words: "from a conviction that no such project can be carried into effect." Now, was ever a Government placed in such a condition? Not only has this House no confidence in the ultimate adoption of this measure—not only has this House determined on its rejection, but the mercantile community of the country, the moment it is announced, decides that it is a mere piece of waste paper, and not worth speculating upon. The market was panic-struck and astonished, when told that a great financial alteration was going to take place; but the moment the Government announced what their plan was, it was treated by one and all as a mere delusion that never would, and never could, be carried into effect. Sir, the following words of this same paper apply to a somewhat different part of this subject; but it may perhaps be interesting to an hon. Gentleman who has this evening spoken about Irish interests, and expressed his intention of voting with the Government, not only upon this question, but also upon that of corn, to hear what is thought in Liverpool by persons competent to judge of the proposed fixed duty of 8s. It is this,— "Whatever difference of opinion there may be as to the degree of protection required for the agriculturists of England and Scot-

land, there is no doubt in the minds of persons experienced in and acquainted with Irish trade, that the scheme proposed by Lord John Russell is virtually a free-trade as regards Ireland; it being notorious that the quality of foreign corn is better than Irish corn by the amount of the duty proposed to be levied." Sir, I repeat my deep regret, that at such a time, at such a crisis of the country, in such a state of our East and West Indian population, and in such a state of her Majesty's Administration, they should have brought forward and thrown before the country a plan like that which they now propose. I believe, that the seed is sown, and will produce its fruit; but I fear it will be the fruit of bitter animosity between contending classes; and that it will give rise to and inflame jealousies and rivalries between the agricultural and manufacturing interests, which every former Government has sought rather to soothe and to heal than to aggravate; I fear that her Majesty's Government, while seeking a popularity which they will not find, are endeavouring to inscribe upon their banners the fatal and revolutionary doctrine of "numbers against property;" I tell hon. Gentlemen opposite, that I can hardly conceive a responsibility deeper than that of a Government which, in the plenitude of their power, should aggravate dissensions of this kind, should introduce new matters of contention, and create sources of difference and division between great classes and bodies of her Majesty's subjects. But I must say, also, that even that responsibility is fearfully increased when the measure which is to produce these results is brought forward by an Administration already tottering to their fall, and when the hon. Gentleman, the Under Secretary for the Colonies, himself, tells us that the principle they are now introducing, the scheme they are now throwing before the country, must for many long years become the subject of angry, hostile, and I fear, of worse than fruitless contention.

Debate adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, May 13, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a first time:—Exchequer Bills; Enrole Collection and Management.—Read a second time:—Banking Copartnership.—Read a third time:—Court of Exchequer (Ireland).

Petitions presented. By the Earls of Strathbrooke, and Mountcashel, Lord Portman, the Marquess of Aylesbury, Lords Beaumont, Pradhoe, and other noble Lords, from Suffolk, Cork, Somersetshire, West Ormiston, Marlborough, and various other places, against any Alteration

of the Corn-laws.—By Earl Fitzwilliam, and the Duke of Cleveland, from Cupar, Yorkshire, Halifax, Durham, and other places, for a Total Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Haddington, Lord Sudley, and the Earl of Warwick, from Blandford-square, and other Districts of London, for the Extinction of the Tolls on the Bridges.—By the Duke of Sutherland, the Earls of Lovelace, and Fitzwilliam, from Bernard Castle, Surrey, and Yorkshire, for the Abolition of Church Rates.—By the Earls of Errol, and Rosebery, from Aberdeen, Fife, and Arbroath, against any change in the Banking system of Scotland.—By the Earl of Winchelsea, from Blackburn, against any further Grant to Maynooth College.—By the Earl of Errol, Lord Strathairn, and the Duke of Argyll, from Cookstown, Molin, Peterhead, Ballymahon, and other places, against Lay Patronage.

CORN-LAWS — EDUCATION.] Earl Fitzwilliam presented a large number of petitions praying for a repeal or alteration of the Corn-laws; from the weavers of Cupar, for immediate repeal; from the woollen cloth-workers of a place in Yorkshire, complaining that their goods had been driven out of many foreign markets, and were losing others, through the operation of the Corn-laws; from Halifax; from female inhabitants of the West-Riding of Yorkshire; from another place in Yorkshire, representing that it was unjust to pass a law to keep up the price of food, when it was not possible to pass a law to keep up wages; from Yeddon, and several other places.

The Earl of Warwick reminded the House, that he had presented a petition lately which had been rather closely scrutinised. He had just taken up one of the petitions presented by the noble Earl opposite—that which purported to be from certain female inhabitants of ——— and found that all the signatures except five had crosses attached to them. Such was the way in which these petitions were got up. Of the five signatures which were without crosses, three were of persons named Wood, in the same handwriting; and two, Mary Stockton and Elizabeth Stockton, in the same handwriting; with these exceptions, all the signatures had crosses.

Earl Fitzwilliam thought, that this petition ought not to be treated so lightly as the noble Earl had treated it. The noble Earl had had all the inestimable advantages of education, and so had the whole of their Lordships, but would it be contended, because persons in the humble station of life of the petitioners had not all these advantages, that they were therefore to be deprived of the right of expressing their opinions, and of giving vent to their feelings? Whatever the noble Earl

might suppose, those people, although uneducated, were perfectly capable of feeling and of appreciating the operation of a law which seriously injured them. Individuals in elevated stations might look down with a contemptuous eye on those poor petitioners, but he would say, that no great political wisdom was manifested in viewing with too much nicety the flaws or errors that might be found in such petitions, and making unfriendly comments on them. If the noble Earl could show, that the petitioners had no serious evil to complain of, it would be more to the purpose for him to undertake that task, than to make observations on the ignorance of those people. The noble Earl had challenged observation. ["No, no," *from the Opposition Benches.*] What! had not the noble Earl challenged observation by the course which he had taken? He contended that the noble Earl had challenged observation; but the fact was, that noble Lords did not like observations of this kind to be made; he knew very well that they did not; they were not very fond of hearing comments of this kind from certain quarters. If noble Lords were displeased at the ignorance of the people, why did they not join in an endeavour to get rid of that ignorance? The ignorance of the people, it should be remembered, was not their crime, but their misfortune.

The Earl of *Warwick* denied that he had alleged anything against the petitioners. What he meant to say was this, that, with the exception of five names, all the rest were crosses, which he considered an unprecedented thing. He did not say, nor insinuate, that the poor ought not to be heard, or that their Lordships were not bound to hear their complaints, and, if possible, to redress them. When he spoke of the petition, it was with reference to the manner in which it was got up. With the exception of five, there were no names to it, and how could they tell in what manner, or by whom, the crosses were affixed?

The Earl of *Hardwicke* congratulated the noble Earl opposite on the opportunity which he had taken to make what he would call a clap-trap speech, a flourish, a sort of pompous declamation, that would go abroad and extend the notion that the noble Earl was a very great advocate for the poorer classes. He believed, however, that there were many noble Lords who,

though they did not stand forward so prominently as the noble Earl, and differed from him in opinion, felt as deeply as he possibly could for the situation of the poor. He had not been so long in Parliament as the noble Earl, and possibly was not so well acquainted with its usages, but he believed that it was no uncommon thing to take up a petition that was said to express the opinion of a large body of the people,—and, coming from a large body of the people, must be supposed to carry with it a certain degree of weight,—for the purpose of seeing, by an inspection of the manner in which it was prepared, what importance ought to be attached to it. It was certainly their duty to consider the sufferings of the people, to attend to their complaints, and to alleviate their distress; but while he allowed that principle in its widest extent, they surely might be permitted to judge of the degree of weight which ought to be attached to those petitions, with reference to the education of the parties from whom they came. They regretted with the noble Lord, that the persons who signed these petitions were not educated as well as their Lordships themselves. But in the course of presentation of those petitions for the last three or four nights the noble Earl had continually addressed that House with the view of bringing on a debate on incidental points of the whole subject. [Earl *Fitzwilliam*.—"I did not begin it."]—which might tend, as he thought, to place his case before the public in a better position; but, a great part of the noble Earl's statement was very doubtful and debateable, whilst one point of the subject, which was not doubtful or debateable, the noble Earl blinked totally, and that was, that the object he had in view was that of ultimately giving to this county a fixed duty on corn, and not a sliding duty, and the noble Earl hoped in these incidental debates to be able to convince the people that a fixed duty was not any duty at all.

Petition laid on the table.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Thursday, May 13, 1841.*

*MINUTES.]* Petitions presented. By Sir C. Grey, from North and South Shields, for an Inquiry into the application of Tolls levied by the Corporation of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—By Mr. Baines, Mr. Rundle, Mr. H. Berkeley, Mr. Strutt, Colonel Salway, and other hon. Members, from Leeds, Gloucester, Derby, and other places, for the

Government proposition for the Alteration of the Import Duties.—By Mr. M. Phillips, Mr. Hume, Mr. Collins, Mr. Denistoun, Mr. W. Evans, Mr. Wilbraham, and other hon. Members, from Manchester, Carmarthen, North Derbyshire, Cheshire, Otley, Leeds, and many other places, for the entire Abolition of the Corn-laws.

**THE EARL OF CARDIGAN.]** Mr. *Muntz* rose to make the motion of which he had given notice, in reference to the conduct of the Earl of Cardigan, as Colonel of the 11th Hussars.

Lord *J. Russell* expressed a hope that the hon. Member would not press his motion that evening.

Mr. *Muntz* was very sorry that he could not comply with the noble Lord's request, as he was extremely anxious to bring the subject before the House with as little delay as possible, and particularly to do so before a dissolution could take place. He begged on the outset to disclaim all personal feeling towards the noble Lord whom his motion had regard to; in fact, he knew nothing personally of the noble Lord, never having even seen him. He would not have brought forward the subject at all, but that he had been urged by many parties to do so for some weeks past. Why they selected him, he knew not, unless it was that they were aware of his being unconnected with any party, and independent of all men. He had waited for some weeks in hopes that some older Member of that House would take the matter in hand, but, finding that such was not the case, and feeling that it ought not to be put off any longer, he was obliged to take it up himself. He hoped that in doing so the House would not consider that he was the Friend of disorder, or the enemy of discipline. On the contrary, no man had a higher sense of the necessity of preserving the discipline of the army than himself. But he was assured that the present questions had nothing to do with the discipline of the army. They were altogether of a private nature, but at the same time of such a character as to have disgusted a very large portion of the community. The immediate cause of his motion was, the flogging of a man on the Sabbath-day, but he would not have considered even that a sufficient justification for his interference, was it not that that was but the last of a series of misdeeds on the part of the noble Earl, which made it impossible to believe, that there was not something more culpable than neglect on his part. He understood

that on the occasion referred to, the noble Earl had marched the men out of the riding school immediately after divine service, for the express purpose of having a place fixed for the punishment of the private, and that the punishment took place on the very spot where the clergyman had read the church service a few minutes previously; the men being marched back again to witness the proceeding. Now he was always opposed to flogging in the army; he thought it, under all circumstances, very objectionable; and particularly so as inflicted upon Englishmen. In the French and Prussian armies this species of punishment was not inflicted, and he did not see why it should not be abolished in the English army also. But admitting even that this punishment was necessary, surely there could be no necessity for its being inflicted on the Sabbath-day; or if there was some cogent reason for inflicting it on this day, on the present occasion, the public should be made acquainted with the fact; and the noble Earl ought to be glad of an opportunity of justifying his conduct in their eyes. There was a general feeling amongst the public of the existence of favouritism at the Horse Guards, in reference to the noble Lord in command of the 11th Hussars; and the impression prevailed that the conduct of the authorities, in regard to that regiment, was very different to what it would have been, under the circumstances, towards any other regiment in the service. This was not as it should be, for the public ought to have reason to believe, that in the army, as in other departments of the State, whether a man was noble or not, he was subject to the same laws as others. One great point, however, which went to confirm the impression of the public as to undue favouritism towards the Earl of Cardigan, was the fact that one of the Captain Reynolds was permitted to enjoy a long leave of absence on full pay, under the promise also that he should never again be called upon to serve under the Earl of Cardigan: and this he thought was very strong presumptive evidence of acknowledged misconduct on the part of the noble Earl. The fact was, that the noble Earl, with many excellent qualities, appeared to labour under a failing which rendered him totally unfit to command others; and that was a total want of command over his own temper. Now, to give a few instances of

the way in which Lord Cardigan had managed the regiment under his command, he would beg to read to the House a few plain facts:—In two years, the regiment being 360 strong, the Earl of Cardigan had held 105 Courts-martial. In the same two years he punished in the defaulters' list upwards of 700 men. During the same period, 90 men were placed in Canterbury gaol. During twenty years in India, the regiment was 700 strong, and the punishments less than during the two years under the command of the Earl of Cardigan. During his command for one month, there were more Courts-martial and more men defaulters than in the preceding twelve months. In a following six months that he had not the command, there were only two Courts-martial. He refused Captain Reynolds leave of absence which he had previously given, on the ground that the verdict of a court-martial, of which Captain Reynolds was president, was contrary to his wishes. He frequently gave the lie to officers when on duty before the men. Now, when a commanding officer gave a subordinate officer the lie in face of the regiment, he would leave it to Gentlemen to say what a man was to do? If he did anything he could only cut him down with his sword, and then be shot for it. He (Mr. Muntz) would not detain the House longer. All he would say in conclusion was, that if he were placed in Lord Cardigan's situation, he should court inquiry; and if the noble Lord did not so court inquiry, there was the better ground to come to the conclusion, that inquiry was necessary. He had no alternative, therefore, but to move, in the terms of his notice,

“That a humble Address be presented to her Majesty, praying her Majesty to institute an inquiry into the conduct of the right hon. the Earl of Cardigan, during his command of the Eleventh Hussars, with the view of ascertaining how far such conduct has rendered him unfit to remain in her Majesty's service.”

Mr. Macaulay hoped to be able, in a few minutes, to state to the House sufficient grounds for dissenting from the motion of the hon. Member. His first objection was a very obvious one. It was a constitutional objection. He believed that the hon. Gentleman himself would admit, that while there was no prerogative of the Crown which that House was not entitled to offer its advice upon, yet it was neces-

sary that, in offering advice on such points, it should be guided by a very sound discretion. Indeed, none but the most imperious reasons, in the most extreme cases, could warrant such interference with the royal prerogative; and he believed that, above all other prerogatives, in all well-organized states, the control of the army, and the awarding of rewards and punishments to military men, were considered most exclusively to belong to the supreme executive authority; and that such matters ought not to be submitted to large popular assemblies of men, who were too apt to be influenced by party and factious impulse. He did not deny, however, that there might be extreme cases in which such interference would be prudent and proper; but he did not think that the present was a case of that kind. He thought that her Majesty's Government ought not to counsel her Majesty to follow the advice of the hon. Member in the present case, whether that advice were concurred in by Parliament or not. With respect to the particular occurrence to which the hon. Member had referred, he had not hesitated, on a former occasion, to express the opinion he entertained of the conduct of the noble Earl on that occasion; but he must say, that whatever might be the faults of the noble Earl, he considered him as one of the most unfortunate men of the present time. Into the merits and demerits of the noble Earl's conduct, however, he would not go at present, but, viewing that conduct in whatever light it might deserve, he still said, that the present motion was highly objectionable, because, in all matters of this kind, they should be guided by general rules; they should beware how they hastened to take advantage of the unpopularity of an individual, to introduce a precedent which, if once established, would lead to the most fatal effects to the whole of our military system, and work a great injustice to all officers in her Majesty's service. What was the case of officers in the army? They bought their commissions at a high price, the interest of which would be very nearly equal to the pay they received; they devoted the best years of their lives to the service, were liable to be sent to all, and even to the most unhealthy parts of the globe, where their health, and sometimes their lives, fell a sacrifice. Now, was it to be expected that men of spirit and honour would consent



to enter this service, if they had not, at least, some degree of security of the permanence of their situations. Certainly one of those securities was, that no officer should be deprived of his commission, except by sentence of a court-martial. There might certainly be exceptions; as, for instance, where an officer had done something which was cognizable by court-martial, but there were strong reasons why a proceeding of that sort should not be adopted. But to charge an officer by an *ex post facto* proceeding, without a court-martial, and of a nature not cognizable by virtue of the Mutiny Act, would lead to a great injustice, and a most fatal uncertainty in our whole military system. If some part of the statements which had been made were true; if the fact of the Earl of Cardigan having given the lie to one of the officers at the head of his regiment had been represented to the proper military authorities, notice would have been immediately taken of it. He could only say, that he never heard the smallest whisper of such a practice. With regard to the unhappy event of the flogging on the Sunday, he believed that no person acquainted with the military law of this country would be of opinion that that was an act on which, however flagrant it might be considered, as a breach of decorum, which a court-martial would condemn as a breach of military law. That opinion rested on the authority of Lord Hill, the Adjutant-General, and the Duke of Wellington, who said that, however great the indecorum might be of an act not included in the Articles of War, or the Mutiny Act, or the regulations of the army, it must be looked on as a *casus omissus*, which could only subject an officer to a reprimand by general order, and thus be raised to an offence which, in future, would make the party guilty of it liable to court martial. As to the proposition of the hon. Gentleman, for erecting that House into a penal court of inquiry, he must protest against it as a species of tribunal, dangerous and revolutionary. It would make that House, which had not the power to administer an oath to witnesses, or punish them if they prevaricated, a court for passing a sentence, which might ruin a poor man in the shape of a pecuniary fine, or in attaching a stigma to his name almost worse than death itself. With regard to the part which he felt it his duty to take on this question, he defied any Gentleman to

imagine any motive which he could have beyond a regard to the performance of the duties of his office, and a regard for the interests of the service, in speaking as he had done in behalf of a man with whom he had never had the slightest personal communication, whom he did not know by sight, and with regard to whom everything that he did know—apart from the unfortunate circumstances with which his name had been mixed up—led him to think he was a decided opponent of the Government of which he was a Member, and of the party to which he was attached.

Lord G. Lennox was anxious to allude to one statement which had been made by the hon. Member for Birmingham. The hon. Member had stated, that the Earl of Cardigan had given the lie direct to one of his officers. That statement he would take upon himself to say was not founded in fact. On only one occasion, and then not at the head of his regiment, but in the dinner room, had something of the nature alluded to taken place. But the hon. Member had no right to bring that forward, because the matter had been arranged in a manner satisfactory to the feelings of both parties. The officer, who had received a reply in a moment of irritation, which he (Lord G. Lennox) admitted ought never to have been given, had subsequently received a satisfactory explanation from the Earl of Cardigan—an explanation which was equally honourable to the noble Earl who had given it, and to the officer who had received it. The hon. Member had alluded to the returns of the number of punishments which had taken place in the regiment since it had been under the command of the Earl of Cardigan. He (Lord George Lennox) knew not what those punishments were, but he did know when regiments returned to the United Kingdom, after an absence of twenty years in India, soldiers were in the habit of squandering their money, and that the discipline of regiments returning from foreign stations was, generally speaking, more lax than that of regiments which had passed the same period at home. After all, the only reason urged by the hon. Member for his motion was, that the Earl of Cardigan had flogged a man on a Sunday, for all his other acts had been approved by the Horse Guards, and if anything wrong had been done they were the proper people to be blamed. No

man regretted that circumstance more than he (Lord Lennox) did: no man he was sure regretted it more than the Earl of Cardigan himself. It was done from no bad motive, and probably without thought. He would ask the House if any other commanding officer had been guilty of this act, nay, if the captain of a man of war had committed it, would it ever have been brought before the House of Commons; he ventured to say they would never have heard of it. He maintained that the Earl of Cardigan had been, and was still an abused man. Had he not been the Earl of Cardigan, the press would never have raised the cry it did. He would never have had the names of tyrant and of worse than a convicted felon applied to him. Again, the Earl of Cardigan had been hardly used by bringing him before a penal tribunal for doing what no British officer could help doing. Officers in the army were in a most awkward and trying situation with respect to duels. If they resented an insult, they were liable to fine and imprisonment; and if they did not resent an insult, they were dismissed from the service. He knew a case in which a difference having arisen between an officer and a civilian, the former was removed from the army, though four shots had been exchanged, because he was supposed not to have taken sufficiently early notice of the offence. The gallant Member for Armagh would, he was sure, confirm the statement which he had made, as he was cognisant of the transaction. Although he had no doubt that the Earl of Cardigan would be most happy to have the whole subject inquired into, yet he must resist the motion, as no grounds were adduced to support it.

Mr. W. O. Stanley must be allowed to say that, when the rank of the officer was said to be the ground for attack, he could not help recollecting that officers who did not stand in so favourable a position, who had purchased their commissions and spent the prime of their lives in foreign countries, were dismissed the service without any display of that cherishing leniency which had been vouchsafed to Lord Cardigan. It was hard that such men, placed under the command of an officer whose temper seemed to be incorrigible, should be driven to acts which deprived this country of their service, and visited them with a sentence of disgrace by court-martial. He should support the motion.

Sir H. Vivian said, that he did not wish to prolong this discussion, nor did he wish to conceal his unqualified disapproval of Lord Cardigan's conduct in case of the soldier that was flogged on Sunday; but, from a conversation which he had with Lord Cardigan upon the subject, he was sure that his Lordship's conduct in that transaction arose from an error in judgment; and Lord Cardigan had authorised him to express to the House his deep regret that he should have been led by an error of judgment to the commission of such an act—and to express the hope that no Member of that House would attribute to him the wish to be guilty of any act of an inhuman character from any other motive than erroneously believing it to be in the fulfilment of his duty. With respect to the charge of having given the lie to an officer, he did not admit that any such occurrence had taken place. Something had certainly occurred in a room which required an explanation at the time between Lord Cardigan and an officer of the regiment, but the matter was satisfactorily settled by that explanation. If it had not been so settled, and that a complaint had been made to the Horse Guards of Lord Cardigan having given such an offence, there could be no doubt that Lord Hill would have seen justice done by bringing the matter before a court-martial. He again expressed to the House, on the part of Lord Cardigan, that noble Lord's deep regret for the error into which he had fallen.

Colonel Verner rose to confirm what had fallen from the noble Lord opposite (Lord George Lennox) as to an officer having been obliged to quit the service for not having taken notice in proper time of an offence given to him by a civilian, although he went out with his opponent, and they fired four shots each. The way in which he was removed from the service was, that it was intimated to him that he had permission to sell out and quit the service.

Mr. Ewart said, that his right hon. Friend, in resisting this motion, concluded in a way which would seem to justify inquiry; for he insisted, that the delicacy of feeling and high spirit of British officers should be kept sacred by that House and the country. Seeing, then, that these had been injured—so far as they had any means of judging of the fact—he maintained that a case was made out for in-

vestigation. Though there was no foundation for saying, that Lord Cardigan gave the lie to an officer at the head of his regiment, he had been confessedly guilty of an offence akin to it. Should the hon. Member offer to prove the former assertion, was not an accusation so deeply affecting the character of the noble Lord worthy of inquiry? The noble Earl confessed to an error of judgment in one case. Were they not to inquire whether there were not other errors of judgment also committed? The noble Earl was defended on the ground of being a much abused man. How was this assertion to be proved but by inquiry? Feeling that that inquiry was due equally to the army and to the noble Lord, he should vote for the motion.

Mr. Warburton, after the apology offered by Lord Cardigan for the case of flogging (which he had always considered the noble Earl's lightest offence), should not say a word on that subject. He remembered quoting, on a former night, Sir J. Macdonald's address to the officers of the eleventh hussars, in which he characterised the conduct of the noble Lord in some such words as these, "that it rendered the regiment unfit for service at home or abroad." He (Mr. Warburton), then expressed an opinion that if the conduct of the noble Earl was such as to reduce the regiment to a state of disorder, it was fitting, that the Horse-guards should institute an inquiry. For what did the public contribute to the cost of a regiment, if it were not, that either at home or abroad, it should be in a soldier-like condition? But were the public to pay for a regiment whose conduct had been characterised in such terms, and yet all inquiry stopped into the demeanour of the lieutenant-colonel by the commander-in-chief? He could not understand that doctrine. On the last occasion he addressed the House, a gallant Member opposite, and the right hon. Secretary at War, denied, that he quoted the words of the address correctly. If he had known the present motion were coming on that evening, he should have taken care to bring the document with him. The words which he intended to have read amounted he believed, to this, that the discipline of the regiment had been materially affected by the conduct of the commanding officer. In justice to the public, then, and to the officer responsible for the discipline of the

army, this inquiry ought to be entered upon.

Viscount Howick retained the opinion he had formerly expressed, that it would have been for the advantage of the service if an inquiry had taken place at an earlier period by order of the Commander-in-chief. Still he was not prepared to concur in the motion of the hon. Member for Birmingham, on the ground stated by his right hon. Friend, the Secretary at War—that although that House had undoubtedly the right of advising the Crown as to the exercise of its power over the army, as of all its other prerogatives, still that right should be exercised with the greatest caution, and only in extreme cases. He did not think there was sufficient ground for exercising their power in the present instance. He could not, however, help adding, that he greatly regretted that his right hon. Friend, the Secretary at War, had pushed his opposition to this motion so far as to make a statement not at all called for by the circumstances of the case, and which, if unnoticed, might lead to very serious inconvenience—namely, that no officer of the British army ought to be removed from his commission, unless he were guilty of some offence of which a court-martial would take cognizance. That was a proposition to which he entirely demurred; and, he was quite sure, the hon. and gallant Officer opposite, who was formerly Secretary at War (Sir H. Hardinge), would concur with him in thinking, that the Crown had the prerogative, and sometimes exercised it, of removing officers from their commissions, even when no distinct and specific offence could be charged against them. An officer might show himself generally unfit for command—incapable of performing the important duties of his situation—and it would then become the duty of the advisers of the Crown to remove him. That necessity was not removed by the circumstance, that the officer might have purchased his commission, for the Crown had the means of obviating that difficulty, by giving him permission to sell out. That was a course which it was by no means unusual for the Horse-guards to adopt, where an officer was unfit for the duties of his command.

Sir A. Dalrymple advised the hon. Member for Bridport, when next he ventured to state the substance of a memorandum, not to come without a book. He

took the liberty of contradicting the assertion when the hon. Member made it before. There could have been no such memorandum issued from the Horse-guards, as Lord Cardigan would not have been permitted to remain at the head of the regiment.

Colonel *Salwey* considered it his duty—his painful duty—to support the motion. He considered the conduct of Lord Cardigan calculated to promote, not only disaffection, but disgust, in the ranks of the British army. The case at Hounslow was wholly unprecedented within his memory, and he had served thirty years in the army. It proved the commander wanting in judgment and discretion, and, therefore, unfit for such a position in the service as he held. No one had been bold enough during that debate, to say, that the 11th Hussars had not been found fault with by the Horse-guards. He should read Sir J. Macdonald's address to the regiment:—

"The commanding officer of the 11th Hussars should feel, that he has an arduous duty to perform; that he has not only to command and form for service a body of soldiers newly raised, and entirely re-mounted and equipped, but a corps of officers either recently returned from service in a tropical climate, in which the habits and customs of the service, must differ from those in European service, or who have been but a short time in the army. He should view their errors with indulgent moderation, particularly if he should not have reason to believe, as the General commanding in chief feels confident he will not, that the errors are to be attributed to wilful disobedience, insubordination, or disrespect of his authority. He should never forget, that those placed under his command are so by the grant to them of the commissions of our gracious Sovereign as well as to himself, are officers in the service of her Majesty, gentlemen of education as well as himself, under the protection of her most gracious Majesty, of the authorities of the army and of the law, as long as they perform their duty, and conduct themselves as officers and as gentlemen ought. He must recollect, that it is expected from him not only to exercise the military command over this regiment, but to give an example of moderation, temper, and discretion, blended with the zealous activity and ability for which he is noted, which will tend to form others to be able hereafter to perform the high duties, which, in the course of their professional life, each of those placed under his command, may be called upon hereafter to perform."

He should only further say, that any man who voted for this inquiry performed an act of friendship to the noble Earl.

Mr. *Warburton* said, he had found the passage to which he alluded, and whether it made entirely for, or partly against him, he thought it but fair to read it to the House:—

"But the General commanding-in-chief feels, that he should only deceive the officers of the 11th Hussars, if he did not apprise them of his opinion, that the proceedings of the late general court-martial, and the various disputes amongst themselves, complaints and instances of disobedience, insubordination, and disrespect, towards the commanding officer recorded therein, as well as in the correspondence with the Adjutant-general, at the Horse-guards, must attract the serious attention of his Royal Highness, their colonel, her Majesty the Queen, her servants, and the public in general; and it is impossible, that it should not be felt, that the 11th Hussars is not in the state in which a regiment ought to be, in order to afford ground for confidence that it would, in quarters, or in the field, at home or abroad, render the efficient service which might be expected from a body of non-commissioned officers and soldiers so well trained and disciplined in the performance of their duty as light cavalry, in such good order, and uniformly so well conducted in their barracks and quarters; and this on account of the lamentable disputes and differences among the officers, their disrespect to their commanding officer, their disobedience and insubordination."

Mr. *Hume* inquired, whether it was true; as had been stated, that Captain John Williams Reynolds had got two or three years' leave of absence with the understanding, that he should not be again called on to serve under Lord Cardigan, on condition of withdrawing his request to be allowed to sell out of the regiment. He also wished to know if leave of absence had been granted to Dr. Sendon, of the 11th Hussars?

Mr. *Macaulay* had not expected those questions to be put, and, therefore, he was unable to give so detailed an answer as might otherwise have been expected. He could state, however, from a conversation he had lately had with the Adjutant-general, that the facts with respect to Captain Reynolds stood thus. When the regiment came from India, Captain J. Reynolds applied for leave to go to the Military College. The application was referred to Lord Cardigan; but as the regiment was then not in a high state of discipline, and short of captains, leave of absence was refused. Subsequently, however, the discipline of the regiment being improved, and there being no want

of captains, he was, at his own request, suffered to go. He believed, that Dr. Sandon had also obtained leave, which would expire in a few days.

Mr. Muntz, in reply, said, he had not asked for an unconstitutional inquiry, nor for an inquiry by that House, nor for a court-martial. Why, then, did the right hon. Gentleman infer, that he had? It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to shuffle and twist about, but no man should put words into his mouth. Every one who had spoken, had admitted that the noble Earl had committed a great outrage. If flogging on Sundays were to be permitted, they would soon have hanging on Sundays. But flogging a man within an inch of his life, was almost the same as hanging him. He denied, that he should have looked over this affair, if a poor man had been the person inculpated in it. He denied, that he was an enemy to the aristocracy. He was often blamed for supporting the aristocracy. For his own part, he made no difference between aristocrats and democrats, when any of them were in the wrong. He must say, he felt surprised, that the noble Earl had obtained promotion while so many other men had been passed for. All he asked, was an inquiry into the matter, because he disapproved of the system, because the flogging was given on a Sunday, and, therefore, a great outrage on public feeling, and because he thought it would do the noble Earl himself no little good.

The House divided :—Ayes 58 ; Noes 135 : Majority 77.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Alston, R.	Ewart, W.
Armstrong, A.	Fielden, J.
Barnard, E. G.	Fitzpatrick, J. W.
Barrow, H. W.	Grattan, H.
Barry, G. S.	Graig, D.
Blake, M. J.	Hastie, A.
Blake, W. J.	Hawkins, J. H.
Blewitt, R. J.	Hector, C. J.
Bridgeman, H.	Hindley, C.
Briscoe, J. I.	Holland, R.
Brotherton, J.	Hume, J.
Bulwer, Sir L.	Hutton, R.
Clements, Viscount	Marsland, H.
Craig, W. G.	Morris, D.
Crompton, Sir S.	O'Brien, C.
Currie, R.	O'Brien, W. S.
Denison, W. J.	Ponsonby, hon. J.
Dundas, C. W. D.	Roche, Sir D.
Edice, E.	Rundle, J.
Emmell, R.	Selwley, Colonel

Stanley, hon. W. O.  
Stansfield, W. R. C.  
Stock, Mr. Serjeant  
Strickland, Sir G.  
Strutt, E.  
Style, Sir C.  
Thornely, T.  
Turner, E.  
Turner, W.  
Villiers, hon. C. P.  
Wakley, T.

Wallace, R.  
Warburton, H.  
White, L.  
White, S.  
Wilbraham, G.  
Wood, B.  
Yates, J. A.

#### TELLERS.

Muntz, G. F.  
Scholefield, J.

#### *List of the NOES.*

A'Court, Captain	Gordon, hon. Captain
Antrobus, E.	Goulburn, rt. hn. H.
Bagge, W.	Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.
Bagot, hon. W.	Granby, Marquess of
Baillie, Colonel,	Grey, rt. hn. Sir C.
Baillie, H. J.	Grey, rt. hn. Sir G.
Baker, E.	Grimditch, T.
Baldwin, C. B.	Hale, R. B.
Baring, H. B.	Hamilton, Lord C.
Barneby, J.	Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.
Bethell, R.	Harland, W. C.
Blackburne, I.	Hawkes, T.
Blackstone, W. S.	Henniker, Lord
Blair, J.	Hepburn, Sir T. B.
Blennerhassett, A.	Herries, rt. hn. J. C.
Bolling, W.	Hill, Sir R.
Bradshaw, J.	Hodgson, F.
Broadwood, H.	Hope, hon. C.
Bruce, C. L. C.	Hurt, F.
Buller, Sir J. Y.	Ingham, R.
Calcraft, J. H.	Irving, J.
Campbell, Sir H.	Jackson, Mr. Serjeant
Canlitupe, Viscount	Kerrison, Sir E.
Cartwright, W. R.	Kelburne, Viscount
Castlereagh, Viscount	Knightly, Sir C.
Christopher, R. A.	Lefroy, rt. hn. T.
Clay, W.	Lennox, Lord A.
Clayton, Sir W. R.	Lincoln, Earl of
Clements, H. J.	Lindsay, H. H.
Clive, hon. R. H.	Litton, E.
Cochrane, Sir T. J.	Lowther, J. H.
Codrington, C. W.	Lygon, hon. G.
Cole, hon. A. H.	Macauley, rt. hn. T. B.
Corry, hon. H.	Macnamara, Major
Dalrymple, Sir A.	Maidstone, Viscount
Darby, G.	Manners, Lord C. S.
Darlington, Earl of	Maunsell, T. P.
De Horsey, S. H.	Melgund, Viscount
D'Israeli, B.	Monypenny, T. G.
Dugdale, W. S.	Morgan, O.
Egerton, W. T.	Muskett, G. A.
Egerton, Sir P.	Norreys, Lord
Elliot, hon. J. E.	Northland, Lord
Estcourt, T.	Paget, Colonel
Fellowes, E.	Pakington, J. S.
Filmer, Sir E.	Palmer, G.
Fleming, J.	Parker, R. T.
Forester, hon. G.	Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.
Fremantle, Sir T.	Peel, J.
French, F.	Perceval, Colonel
Freshfield, J. W.	Polhill, F.
Gaskell, J. Milnes	Powerscourt, Viscount
Gladstone, J. N.	Richards, R.
Gladstone, W. E.	Ross, rt. hn. Sir G.

Round, C. G.  
Rushbrooke, Colonel  
Russell, Lord J.  
Russell, Lord C.  
Shaw, rt. hon. F.  
Sibthorp, Colonel  
Sinclair, Sir G.  
Somerset, Lord G.  
Stanley, Lord  
Stanley, M.  
Stuart, Lord J.  
Stuart, W. V.  
Sturt, H. C.  
Teignmouth, Lord  
Thornhill, G.  
Trench, Sir F.

Trevor, hon. G. R.  
Tyrell, Sir J. T.  
Vere, Sir C. B.  
Verner, Colonel  
Villiers, Viscount  
Vivian, rt. hon. Sir R. H.  
Waddington, H. S.  
Wall, C. B.  
Walsh, Sir J.  
Wodehouse, E.  
Wyndham, W.  
Young, Sir W.

## TELLERS.

Lennox, Lord G.  
Seymour, Lord

**SUGAR DUTIES.—EXPLANATION.]** Mr. Gladstone said, that before the order of the Day for resuming the Debate was read he hoped for the indulgence of the House for a moment, while he entered into a short explanation on a subject that referred to those who were most near and dear to him, as introduced by a noble Lord opposite (Lord Howick) the night before in the course of his speech, and he was sure, under such circumstances, the House would not refuse him their attention. He had given notice to the noble Lord of his intention to make this appeal to the House, but although the noble Lord had been in his place in the course of that evening, he had, for some reason or other, left the House. He trusted, therefore, that, although he might not be strictly regular in the course he was pursuing, the House would permit him, when the noble Lord appeared again in his place, to give that explanation which it never refused where private character was involved.

**SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS  
—ADJOURNED DEBATE (FIFTH DAY).]**

Mr. Brotherton in resuming the debate, said, that being connected with the manufacturing districts he wished to be allowed to state in a few words the reasons for the vote which he intended to give upon this question. He had always been opposed to the slave-trade and to slavery, and had given his vote for the grant of 20,000,000*l.* to the West-India planters, in order to obtain a peaceful and amicable settlement of the great question of negro emancipation; and if, in his opinion, the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government was calculated to give encouragement to slavery, he would not support it. He was convinced,

however, from the opinion of those best acquainted with the subject, that no such effect would follow. He had that morning received a letter from the Anti-Slavery Society at Manchester, stating, that they did not concur in the view which the London Anti-Slavery Society took of the subject. And, in his opinion, the Government had shown as great a regard for free labour and been as much opposed to slavery as the Gentlemen opposite. He thought, moreover, that nothing would tend so surely to encourage the slave-trade as the refusal to receive the products of Cuba and Brazil. He looked at the propositions of Government as a whole, and felt, that they demanded his support, even if he had any doubt respecting the Sugar question. Some hon. Members said, they would vote against the proposition respecting sugar, on account of its being connected with other propositions of which they disapproved, and he had a right to say, that he would vote for it, because it was connected with propositions of which he approved. The plan of the Government was protection, not prohibition the plan of the noble Lord (Sandon) purported to be the same, but there was this difference between them, that the former would give sugar at a fair price to the people of this country, whereas the latter would keep it up at an unreasonable price. The plan of the Government provided for any contingent scarcity of the article—the plan of the noble Lord left such contingency wholly dependent upon the permission of the monopolists. There had been an attempt to enlist popular feeling against the plan of the Government and in favour of hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, on the score of slavery, but in his (Mr. Brotherton's) opinion, Mammon was at the bottom of that movement. He would not rely much on the mercy of those who denied justice. The monopolists fought the battle of timber and corn, under the mask of sympathy for the slave. Selfishness was the principle on which the Monopolists acted, and he hoped that the people of England would show that they were determined to protect their own interests. He gave the meed of praise to the Government for bringing forward so noble a measure, and he had no doubt, that in the end it would be carried, because it was founded on the principle of justice. It was stated, that no necessity existed for an alteration such

as that proposed; but those who said so appeared altogether to overlook the sufferings of the commercial and manufacturing interests of the country. The distress at Manchester and in the neighbourhood was such as was never known at any former period. Thousands were out of employment, many mills standing or working short time, wages reduced, poor-rates increasing,—those who occupied houses were becoming lodgers, and families were huddled together in small houses. Disease, crime, and misery, were the natural result of this unfortunate state of things, and unless something was done to relieve the distress of the people he knew not what might be the consequence. In most towns property had much declined in value; and the machinery used in manufactures was generally not worth half the price it would have brought a few years back. As an instance of the deterioration which had taken place, he might mention that about three miles from Manchester there was a large mill, with 63 acres of land attached, a mansion worth from 4,000*l.* to 5,000*l.*, with as many dwelling houses as brought in nearly 1,200*l.* a-year of rental, and which cost the proprietor 120,000*l.* Upon his failure, three years ago, his creditors refused 75,000*l.* for the property; it had been standing for sale now upwards of six months at the price of 40,000*l.*, and not one bidder had offered. In Manchester, Oldham, Stockport, Bolton, Preston, and Salford, there were upwards of 10,000 houses unoccupied, while there had not been one-third of that number empty in 1835. An inquiry had been made last year into the state of 10,000 families, and it had been found that of 2,000 the earnings did not average more than 1*s.* 2*d.* $\frac{1}{2}$  per week for each individual, and at that time relief was given to 10,000 families, or 50,000 persons by voluntary subscription. There was, no doubt, a cause for this great distress, and much of it might be attributable to our present Corn-laws. It was a remarkable fact, that the cost of wheat alone for the three years 1837, 1838, 1839, was 58,555,055*l.* more than in the three years 1834, 1835, and 1836. In order to illustrate the operation of the food laws, an inquiry was instituted into the comparative condition of the work people at a large manufactory in the neighbourhood of Bolton, in the years 1835 and 1840. In the year 1835 these people spent 12,500*l.*

of the amount of their earnings in food, the produce of agriculture, and in 1840, they spent 18,500*l.*, and yet their wages at the latter period were, if any difference existed, rather lower than in the former. That fact alone was sufficient to convince any man of the evil operation of the Corn-laws; and that when bread is dear the people have less to spend in clothing and in procuring the comforts of life. A further proof was furnished in the decreased consumption of sugar. In 1840 there were 25,000 tons less of that commodity consumed than in 1830; and whereas in the latter year the average consumption of the kingdom was 20*lbs.* for each person, in the former, and at the present time it was only 15*lbs.* per head. These facts show the necessity of affording relief to the manufacturing and commercial classes of the community, and that the great object of legislation should be to improve the condition of the millions. By improving the condition of the people we increase the value of the land. What had made the land in England so much more valuable than land in any other part of the world? The commerce of the country. As commerce had prospered the land had increased in value, it was therefore reasonable to suppose that whatever was injurious to commerce must be detrimental to the landed interest. He contended that the Corn-laws, by producing constant fluctuations in the price of grain, were as injurious to the farmers as to the manufacturing and commercial interests. They were unjust in principle, and most oppressive in operation. They imposed a tax upon the people to the extent of 40,000,000*l.* a-year; and in this way a larger sum was annually paid to the monopolists than to the state. By removing such an odious monopoly the House would do justice to the country, and promote the prosperity of every class. He believed, too, that the monopolists themselves, instead of suffering, would be great gainers. The Corn-laws, as they at present existed, were most injurious to the merchant, to the manufacturer, to the artisan, and to every class of labourers, and they were moreover unjust and wicked in themselves. He hoped, therefore, that the people would come forward to express themselves upon this vital question, and that the House would respond to the general feeling of the country by repealing these unjust and odious laws, so that the suffering

population of these realms might become more prosperous, more contented, and more happy.

Mr. *Hamilton* was quite ready to admit the existence of the great distress alluded to by the hon. Member, but he did not think, that to distress other classes would be the best way to relieve it. The hon. Gentleman had stated the facts, but not the whole facts, for he forgot to state all the causes which conduced to that deplorable state of things; more especially those connected with the general condition of trade and commerce all over the world, in consequence of various recent events. The noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) had as he understood, received a statement of the distress in Bolton, from an eminent manufacturer of that town; but he had since been informed, that that Gentleman was busy building new mills at an expense of no less than 70,000*l*. That fact proved one thing at least; it proved that there must have been much exaggeration in the statement. He should not then enter on the question of the sugar duties, nor be tempted into a discussion on the subject by the taunts of the noble Lord, the Member for North Northumberland, but he would confine the very few observations he meant to address to the House to the general policy of her Majesty's Ministers, in proposing changes in the finance and commerce of this country. He believed, in his conscience, that these changes were never intended to be carried into effect by them, and he considered the speech of the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell), in proposing them, one more fitted for the hustings of Finsbury than for a Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons. The noble Lord had taunted his (Mr. *Hamilton*'s) side of the House with new-born zeal in the cause of slavery; but they might equally taunt him and his supporters with new-born zeal in behalf of the poor of this country. Had the pending dissolution anything to do with the noble Lord's proposition? Were the coming elections in his mind when it sprung up? Was cheap sugar offered to sweeten the bitter draught of the New Poor-law to the paupers of England? With respect to the duty on corn, he (Mr. *Hamilton*) should only say one word. If hon. Gentlemen opposite wished to give the people cheap bread, and their employers cheap labour, for one was the natural and ne-

cessary consequence of the other, why not take off the entire duty on corn? Why keep on a tax which was no protection to the agriculturist, while, as it was stated, it kept up the price of bread to the manufacturer. He freely admitted, that labour was not sufficiently paid, especially in the agricultural districts; but would cheap bread better that state of things? It was in evidence, and distinctly proved, that when bread was at the cheapest the distress of the working population was at the greatest, because their wages were commensurately reduced in consequence of the fall in price of that necessary of life. If the Corn-laws were repealed, however, wages that now average 12*s*. a week would fall to 5*s*. 3*d*. Under these circumstances, he should oppose the proposition of her Majesty's Government.

Mr. *Alston* said, as I am not in the habit of frequently occupying the time of the House, I trust, that on the present occasion, they will indulge me for a few minutes, as on a question of so much importance, I am not disposed to give a silent vote. Her Majesty's Ministers on their own responsibility have proposed certain great financial changes, which, in their judgment, will materially benefit all classes in the country. No one, I think, can doubt that our commercial tariff admits of, and requires, great improvement. And consequently it will be right, that a subject so important to us all, brought before as it is by a responsible Government, should meet with full enquiry and consideration, in order that we may ascertain what improvements can be made, and how far such improvements can be carried out. The question is so vast in all its bearings, and so interesting to all, that it requires the fullest and most open investigation; that the country may be enabled to draw its own conclusions on the measures now proposed. And feeling Sir, that a committee of the whole House will be the most satisfactory method of enquiry, as it will place the whole case before the country, I shall decidedly give my vote in opposition to the amendment proposed by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool. I have almost invariably supported her Majesty's present Government, feeling that they were deserving of the confidence of this country and that I was best serving the country, by giving them my zealous support. On



the present proposition for a reduction of the duties on sugar, I shall vote with them; with the anxious desire to aid in reducing those enormous charges on articles of necessary consumption, which are so destructive to our revenues, and so injurious to our fellow creatures. There is no Member of this House more opposed to slavery than I am; nor any one who is more thankful for the abolition of those disgusting laws which upheld that odious and most iniquitous traffic. But I cannot see by what ingenuity the present proposal will in any degree encourage or cause the increase of slavery; and I am fortunately borne out in this conclusion by some resolutions which reached me this morning, from Hitchin, bearing the signature of several gentlemen residing there, most of them of the Society of Friends, all of them influential from their high moral character, and humane and charitable conduct, and to whom the very name of slavery is most repugnant. They state, in the most unequivocal terms, that they cannot admit that the proposed measure will act as an encouragement to slavery. With the permission of the House I will now read these resolutions, which bear among other signatures, those of four delegates to the Anti-Slavery Convention. I am myself interested in this question, having a small property in Jamaica, but I do not feel that by my vote this evening, I am doing the least injury to those interested in the colonies; nay, I draw the very opposite conclusion. Should, Sir, the House proceed to entertain the question of an alteration in the Corn-laws, I shall certainly be in my place, and give to any such proposal my most decided opposition, as I have hitherto done, whenever it has been in any shape submitted to this House. I shall oppose such a proposition, because I feel the occupier of land is entitled to protection; and because from long and close observation, I am satisfied that the agricultural labourer is never so much distressed as when the price of wheat is so low as not to remunerate the occupier. Indeed it is evident, that the price which the farmer receives for his produce, must govern the rate of wages which he pays to his labourers. I shall therefore, Sir, support the proposal of her Majesty's Ministers, for an alteration in the sugar-duties, but certainly oppose their proposal on the Corn-laws.

Mr. Harland said, he was anxious to

explain the grounds upon which he felt obliged to oppose the plan of a Government he had hitherto supported, and with whose general views and policy he had cordially concurred. With regard to the particular question of the reduction of the sugar duties then under discussion, he thought it had been satisfactorily proved that the diminished supply of sugar which had taken place the last two years was owing to temporary causes. Looking, therefore, to the circumstances of the West Indian colonies, and the very peculiar condition of the emancipated negroes in those colonies, he could not but feel, if the Ministerial plan were carried, that it would seriously injure the West-Indian interests, and at the same time endanger the happy working out of the great principle of emancipation, for which England had paid so generously, and in the successful issue of which the people took the deepest interest. But, objectionable as he thought the proposition in itself, he considered it as much more so when taken as forming a part of a large and sweeping, though a very partial alteration, in the protective system of this country. In order to supply a temporary falling off in the revenue, and a temporary excess of expenditure over the income of the country, the Government proposed to make a permanent change in part of the protective duties. He (Mr. Harland), could not but think that this was a very dangerous mode of dealing with a temporary financial difficulty; he thought that looking at the causes which led to the falling off in the revenue, he had a right to look upon it in a temporary light, whilst the war in China, the naval operations on the coast of Syria, and the increased force they had been obliged to keep up in the Canadas—all justified them in the view that the increase of expenditure over revenue was owing to the temporary, and not the permanent exigencies of the country. But the Government, in order to meet the exigency proposed to lower the protective duties hitherto levied upon sugar, timber, and corn of foreign production. He was opposed to the plan, because, if carried, it would be impossible for the present Government, or any other that might succeed it, ever to revert to our present system of protection, even if a future favourable state of the finances of the country should warrant the return to it. He thought it very possible that the present Government

would never have brought forward this plan if it had not been for the present financial difficulties of the country; but it was evident that a vast majority of those hon. Members who would support the Ministers on the present occasion, would cordially hail any falling off in the revenue, if they thought it could be made the successful means of either lowering, or entirely sweeping away, the protective duties of the country. He, therefore, opposed the plan, because it called upon Parliament to make a permanent, though a partial, change in our protective system, and to take a step which, if once taken, could never be retrod, even should the circumstances which alone induced them to make the change be wholly altered and removed. He called upon the House to remember that the chief cause of the deficient revenue was owing to the change that had been made in the Post-office charges; he would ask for whose benefit, and in compliance with whose almost universal petitions was this change made? Not certainly at the instance of the colonists: the agricultural interests did not rise in a mass and petition for the change;—no—but the manufacturing and trading interests did almost to a man; and now in order to supply a deficiency mainly caused by the boon granted last year to the manufacturing and trading interests, the Government came down and proposed a permanent alteration in certain protective duties hitherto enjoyed by the colonial and agricultural interests. He could not but feel that the noble Lord, the Secretary for the colonies, had carried his proposition either too far, or not far enough. If, in consideration of the particular financial difficulties of the country, or from a conviction of the intrinsic value of the principle itself, the noble Lord had felt that the time had come when it became his bounden duty, as a Minister of the Crown, to propose to Parliament that certain duties, hitherto considered merely in a protective light, should for the future be dealt with and fixed so as to meet the financial purposes of the revenue, he thought that justice demanded that the noble Lord should have been prepared at the same time to propose to the House a general and uniform *ad valorem* duty of so much per cent. upon all articles of manufactures and articles of produce. Had the noble Lord done this, no one class and no one interest, however much they

might have disagreed with him in principle, could have complained on the score of injustice or partiality. The question between protective duties on one hand, and duties for revenue on the other, the question between free trade, or an approach to it, and the present system of protection, would have been brought fairly and broadly under the discussion of Parliament and the country. But the noble Lord had not done this; and viewing as he did, the plan of the Government as an attempt to make a permanent change in the protective system of the country, in order to meet a temporary financial difficulty—believing that if carried it would injure the interests of the colonies, endanger the happy issue of the great question of emancipation, and seriously hurt the agricultural interest, without being of any benefit to the working classes, who he firmly believed would lose more by a reduction of their wages than they would gain by any cheapening in the articles of their food—these being his conscientious opinions, he felt it to be his painful duty to oppose the plan of the Government, not only on this occasion, but whenever and in whatever shape it might afterwards come before Parliament.

Mr. *Hastie* said, that having been throughout his life engaged in commerce, he hailed with great satisfaction the plan of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and with still greater satisfaction the speech and the plan of the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, which showed the vast and comprehensive mind of the noble Lord in dealing with the real interests of this country. The hon. Member for Beverley had said that those connected with the East India interest were almost unanimously against the plan of the Government; but he, being the deputy chairman of the East India and China Association, and intimately acquainted with almost all the East India merchants, could tell the House that he knew not of a single exception to the full concurrence which that body felt in the principles avowed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The hon. Member had said, too, that the unanimous opinion of the East India directors was against the proposition. He knew not whether that was or was not the case; but, as to the value of their opinion, he begged to remind the House that when they strenuously opposed the opening of the trade of that vast empire

they had stated that such were the habits and prejudices of its inhabitants that they would not use articles of British manufacture, and that therefore it would be useless to throw open the trade; and yet since the trade had been thrown open, our exportation had increased from about half a million to five millions sterling. He rejoiced at the declared intention of the noble Lord to revise our commercial tariff, because he was convinced that they had arrived at the maximum rate of taxation on imports; and, if a prudent system of reduction was adopted, great relief would be afforded to the working classes of this country, and great assistance would be rendered to our merchants, by facilitating the exchange of British in return for foreign commodities. As to the Corn-laws they operated most prejudicially to the landed interest itself. It would be recollected that at the beginning of last year prices were rather low; an inauspicious spring, a cold summer, and a rather wet harvest, held out to speculators the prospect of a bad crop; and accordingly orders were sent out desiring purchases of corn to be made in all the foreign ports, to be paid for by bills drawn upon the purchasers. Two millions of quarters were so purchased; the bills were drawn, they went into the marts of Petersburg, Vienna, Hamburgh, Paris, and Holland; and of course lowered the exchange instantly against this country. The consequence was that capitalists sent their gold to those markets; the Bank of England was compelled to raise the rate of interest and narrow its circulation; the mercantile man in that state of things naturally desisted from buying manufactures; the manufacturers got large stocks upon their hands, which only fetched half their price; the labouring population was reduced to half their wages; and the farmer lost his market. He had heard a great deal said in that House about cruelty to the black population. No man was more alive to the distresses of his fellow-subjects than he was; but, much as he might deplore the cruelties practised on these people, he could not make up his mind to overlook the cruelties which by the Corn-laws were put on the working classes of his own country, than whom there were no men in the world more ready and willing to work, provided they only received a fair remuneration. He had no doubt but that this question of sugar would be

lost on a division; but, then, some other tax must be imposed in its stead. He should recommend to the Government, in the event of losing this, to equalise the legacy duties. It would be a species of property tax levied on real estates in the same way as it was at present levied on personal. The whole of real estates at present were exempt from all taxes on demise, while all personal estates were heavily burthened with duties. Two millions sterling were derived from that source, and, as the landed interest was by much the larger, it could not object to have that tax put on them. The money was borrowed for the protection of the land, and yet the entire entailed estates of the country did not pay a farthing. The last twelve years had been a favourable average in point of produce, and yet 13,000,000 of quarters had been imported during that period, which clearly showed that we did not grow, within 1,000,000 of quarters yearly, sufficient for our necessities. Hon. Gentlemen were bound to take into consideration that branch of the subject.

Mr. G. Palmer—Sir, the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down lays claim to the attention of the House from his long acquaintance with commercial affairs; on this ground also I may equally ask attention myself. The hon. Member for Salford has stated, that no one has ever been more disposed than himself to put down slavery, and to discourage it by every means in his power, and yet he shall vote against the motion of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool. The hon. Member for Hertfordshire states, that he considers the measures proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of vast financial importance, and therefore he shall vote for the House going into the consideration of them in the committee; but that no one is more averse than he is to do anything to encourage slavery, and that as to the Corn-laws, nothing will induce him to consent to the alteration proposed in them. So different, indeed, has been the line of argument taken by hon. Members in the course of the debate, that it is difficult to guess upon what principle they will go into the division. The noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, and all those who have spoken from this side of the House, as if from authority, for four whole nights of debate, with the exception only of that able and statesman-like

speech of the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire made last night, have confined themselves to the sugar question, almost entirely resting their arguments upon the inhumanity and inconsistency of this country, after the great sacrifices she has made to put down slavery in her own dependencies, now giving her assistance to encourage slavery in foreign countries, by increasing the demand for their produce. The noble Secretary for the Colonies, on the other hand, with the right hon. President of the Board of Trade, and his Friends, touch but lightly upon the sugar question, resting their argument upon the woeful state of the finances of the country, (a state into which their own misconduct alone has brought them), and the hope, that by an alteration in the differential duties they may be able to restore them to a more healthy condition; thus each party is seeking to draw a few votes from the ranks of their opponents. Of the tone taken by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, the right hon. Secretary at War has already sought advantage, by throwing out to the House, that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, if in office, will bring forward similar measures to those now proposed by her Majesty's Ministers, and promising his support upon that occasion, on whatever side of the House he may then be sitting. The hon. Member for Sheffield has followed this up in his remarks upon the speech of the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, thus endeavouring to create distrust and disunion amongst the great party on this side of the House. Sir, I am satisfied that he will be mistaken in his turn; and the speech of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, delivered last night, will be conclusive however. No more, I am certain, will the right hon. Baronet desire to remove that protection from British interests, of whatever character they may be, which he may think sufficient to give them a preference over foreigners, than I myself desire to see that protection carried to the extent of a monopoly. Most cordially do I join with the noble Lord on this side of the House, and with the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, on the other side, in deprecating everything which might tend to encourage that slave-trade in others, which we, upon a high principle of honour and humanity, have put an end to ourselves. Without any other reason

whatever, I should be quite prepared to vote against the proposed alteration in the sugar duties. It is needless therefore for me to occupy any more of the time of the House on this part of the question; but I must beg their attention to those other parts of the question, upon which her Majesty's Government lay the greatest stress. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the right hon. the President of the Board of Trade, seemed most anxious to induce the House to believe, that the measures now proposed were not the hasty determination of the moment, taken up for party purposes, in the hope of securing their situations by a more cordial co-operation of their extreme Radical friends. If, Sir, I am to believe this, what must I think of that first declaration of the right hon. Gentleman, when he proposed the alteration of the rum duties in favour of the East Indies?—when I stated, that it was the prelude to all those measures which he has since proposed. He declared that it was only done as an act of justice to the East Indies; and added, that it could not, in his opinion, injure the interests of the West, as the price of rum in this country was always regulated by the foreign demand, the quantity imported so much exceeding that of the home consumption. He now, Sir, enters boldly into the question, going farther than the noble Lord himself in the declaration, that these measures were brought forward, not more in a financial point of view, than for the purpose of carrying out the great principle of free trade, as he calls it: more properly might he say, for the disfranchisement of British subjects, and British interests, in favour of foreigners. His plans are something like that free trade carried on by the highwaymen on the road, or the wandering Arab in the Desert. He shelters himself under the pretence, that he is only following up the views of the late Mr. Huskisson, and the advice of the merchants and bankers of India. With regard to the first part of his authority, I think the right hon. Member for Harwich, who must have been much more intimately acquainted with the views of that Gentleman than he can pretend to be, most distinctly told him a week or two ago, that Mr. Huskisson was a decided advocate for a reasonable protection to British interests in general, and to the land in particular; and the protecting duties now

existing were in reality of his own proposing: For myself, Sir, I must say, that Mr. Huskisson went far beyond what was prudent in some things, especially in that of withdrawing the protection from one great interest—the shipping of the country—whether, if he had returned to office, as was, I believe, generally expected he was about to do, when he was so suddenly cut off, in that appalling and extraordinary manner, he would have proceeded further in withdrawing protection from British interests; or whether Providence ordained that he should no longer have the power so to do, is not for man to judge. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* His was a theory at the time novel in the world, but honestly adopted by him; that theory has now been acted upon for sixteen years, and no longer have our rulers any excuse for continuing it, unless they can show its beneficial effect to the country in that long trial. I will now advert to the advice of the merchants and bankers in those petitions, which have been so frequently alluded to; and I may be allowed to say a few words to show how little right this House has to consider their opinions, as the opinions of the general class of merchants and traders of the metropolis; but only as the opinions of some high mercantile characters, after having had their heads stuffed, and their understandings bewildered, by the artful lectures of the great political economist, M'Culloch, given at the early hour of nine in the morning, to a select few, for his own purpose, and the purpose of those who sent him there. No general meeting was ever called—no communication was ever made to partners of the gentlemen in the same House, but when the lecturer considered them sufficiently primed for his purpose, they were induced to sign individually that first celebrated petition, and then thought worthy to be made members of a political economy club, by which their continued services were thought to be secured in the same line. Whether their late petitions have satisfied the right hon. Gentleman or not, he is the best judge; but, from appearances, they do not seem all to like the snare into which they have been so artfully drawn. Sir, I do now assert, that the experiment which has been made has altogether failed; and as it is not my intention to weary the House by a variety of details, I will confine myself to two points only. The first

which I may be fairly allowed to take, as the index to the whole, in regard to shipping, is, that notable reciprocity treaty with Prussia. In that treaty his majesty of Prussia permits the subjects of her Britannic Majesty to trade to all ports, islands, and dependencies, in every part of the world, belonging to Prussia, upon the most favoured terms, and in return for this boon a similar favour is granted to the subjects of Prussia by her Britannic Majesty: thus giving Prussia the range of the whole world, in exchange for admission to a small space within the Baltic. What has been the result? the Prussian shipping in comparison with British engaged in the British trade, was on the average of three years to 1824, in tonnage, 60,668 tons, to 87,896 tons British, or about two-thirds. In the three years after 1824 it was 151,658 tons Prussian, and 134,316 tons British, or more than equal; and in the year 1839, the Prussian was 229,208 tons, and the British only 111,470, more than double the British; thus, instead of having employed our own ships and seamen, have we not only paid Prussia for her timber, but been obliged also to pay her freight for bringing it to us. Has this been made up to us by an increased demand on the part of Prussia for our manufactures? In 1827–8–9, the export of our manufactures to Prussia on the average of three years was 180,831*l.*, and in the three last years when I can find the return 1837–8–9, it amounts to the vast sum of 164,535*l.*, or 26,000*l.* less than it was before. Sir, the alteration proposed by her Majesty's Ministers in the duty on timber will again double this vast proportion against us; and by as much reduce the employment of our own ships and seamen. It may be asked, how is it then, that our commercial marine has been kept up, entirely by the increase of our own colonial trade. In 1820, the British and American trade was 343,377 tons, employing 16,819 seamen; and in 1839, 709,896 tons, employing 28,349 seamen. The East-Indies, in 1823, 48,325 tons, employing 3,630 seamen; and in 1839, 138,486 tons, employing 7,772 seamen. The New Holland in 1823, 3,883 tons, employing 222 seamen; and in 1839, 22,376 tons, employing 1,165 seamen. Sir, the hon. Member for Salford has stated, that the manufacturers are in great distress; I especially feel for them, as I would for

any other class. He has attributed that distress to the Corn-laws, a greater fallacy cannot exist their best customers for every thing are found at home; and I cannot do better than advert to a petition which I had the honour to present from the parish of Eastwood, in which the petitioners state, that the reduction in the price of corn must be felt by the labourers in the reduction of wages, by every class of shopkeepers and tradesmen, by the loss of custom; and eventually by the manufacturers themselves—the complainants, who now supply their articles to the shops. In the cotton fabric alone, the value of that part consumed at home, in the labour expended thereon, far exceeds the amount of the sum expended upon the whole of the cotton goods exported to every part of the world. That consumed at home is 11,842,627*l.*, besides the value of the refuse manufactured, which is very considerable; whilst the whole value of that exported, whether in yarn or goods, is only 9,208,446*l.* These were ports to which alone we could look for any supply of corn, do not in reality take from us much more than the thread itself, for the purpose of their own manufactures, now established by the means of machinery exported from this country under the free trade system. Sir, within my own recollection, every cottager's family throughout the country, by spinning and knitting at home were able to earn, in addition to the men's pay, sufficient to supply them with many additional comforts and necessities. These the manufacturers have wrested from them by means of their machinery; and the foreigner is now retorting the same upon them. Surely, then, it is too much to be told, that the distress of the manufacturers is owing to the Corn-laws. Sir, that constituency which I have the honour to represent, desire no monopoly; they ask only for that protection which is due to them according to the charges imposed upon them. The speech of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, will give confidence to the country, and will be read with satisfaction by all from one end of the country to the other.

Mr. *Clay* said, that in the few observations which he had to make he meant strictly to confine himself to the question more immediately before the House, viz.—the proposal for the reduction of the sugar duties. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had been

guilty of a most remarkable inconsistency in the arguments which they had put forward against the proposed change. While, on the one hand, they charged Ministers with bringing forward a measure which, by opening the home market to slave-sugar, would have the effect of encouraging slavery and the slave-trade, they, on the other hand, brought forward with great exultation and confidence certain calculations for the purpose of proving that it was utterly impossible that one single pound of slave-grown sugar could be consumed in this country. With regard to the effect of the proposed plan of the right hon. Gentleman (the Chancellor of the Exchequer), his opinion was, that the anticipated increased consumption of colonial sugar was by no means fallacious. The fair way of looking at the right hon. Gentleman's plan, in a financial point of view, was either that there would be such a supply of sugar from the British colonies as would produce a sufficient revenue, or that there would be such an introduction of foreign sugar as would produce the same effect. A noble Lord (Lord F. Egerton), on a former night, had said, that the saving that would be gained by the proposed measure would not exceed 1*s.* 6*d.* in the cwt., and he argued from thence that no practical benefit would result to the public from so trivial a reduction. But did the noble Lord know what the effect of a reduction of even 1*s.* in the cwt. would be? A reduction of 1*s.* on the cwt. would be no less than 200,000*l.* a-year of the taxation of the country. Reference had been made to the evidence of Mr. Larpent, to show that there would be a large importation of sugar from the East-Indies. But what did Mr. Larpent say? He distinctly stated, that he did not think there could be a large exportation into this country from the East Indies, except at a very high price. He did not see why they should encourage the growth of sugar in the East Indies if it could only be done by bolstering it up by a monopoly. No trade should be encouraged that was not based on its own natural power of production. It was much better to let capital in India be embarked in enterprises that would be more naturally productive. What had been done in the article of cotton? No encouragement was attempted to be given to the growth of cotton in India against the market of the United States, and yet, by the wholesome system pursued, cotton was successfully cultivated in that country. [The hon.

Gentleman entered into some minute detail as to the effect of the duties on the various qualities of sugar, with a view to show that, in reality, the proposed plan of her Majesty's Government would give ample protection to the sugar grown in the British colonies.] His right hon. and learned Colleague, to whom he wished to allude with the greatest possible respect appeared to have overlooked the fact that the differential duty gave great discouragement to the growth of sugar by slave-labour. He would not trouble the House by arguing this point, but when so great a stress was laid upon the encouragement of slavery which the present plan would give, he could not help observing that, according to his judgment and experience, the differential duties would operate as a direct and absolute discouragement of slavery. He was himself of opinion, that at the price which must prevail in this country, with the duty proposed by Government, the West Indies could successfully cultivate sugar. That price could not be less than from 30s. to 35s. per cwt. He not only thought, that they might now grow sugar at 35s. a cwt., but that under the stimulus of free trade, the growing of sugar in those colonies would be improved, and go on increasing in productiveness. The noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, seemed to think that his speech would give extraordinary satisfaction to all persons engaged in the sugar trade. In that opinion, he entirely differed from the noble Lord. The merchants of this country must be less acute than he took them to be, if they could accept the counters of the noble Lord for the real bullion upon this question. All that he could collect from the noble Lord's speech was, that it indicated (and that was no usual case with the noble Lord) no inconsiderable degree of alarm—he would repeat the expression—it indicated no inconsiderable degree of alarm, that the country began to apprehend the real nature of the contest between the two great parties in the state—the one party taking for its object the widening and freedom of trade, and the other advocating vested interests and the old system of monopoly and restriction. What did the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, say last night? He said to hon. Members on this side of the House, "You claim credit for advancing principles of free trade. We don't oppose those principles; but your's is not free trade—it is protection." Did the noble Lord really believe, that so shallow a soph-

ism would go down with the people of England? Did he mean to say, that free trade could be reconciled with a high rate of duty. Did the noble Lord mean to say, that there was no difference between a duty of 1s. a quarter and 100s. a quarter? that both were merely duties of protection? Did the noble Lord really mean to say, that these were the same thing, and that the whole question was not, in point of fact, one as to the amount of duty? Seeing that the party to which he had the honour to belong had announced their intention to act boldly and efficiently to support free trade, and knowing that they had on other occasions put themselves at the head of great and beneficial reforms of the commercial code, and were formerly the means of introducing Parliamentary Reform, by which they extended popular rights and privileges—so now he rejoiced to belong to that party because they were about to propose to the House of Commons a further reform not less important in our commercial code, which, it was certain, under whatever legislature might exist, would extend the comforts of the people of England, and, as far as could be done by legislative enactment, secure the prosperity of the country.

Mr. A. Chapman: Having presented to this House petitions from the Ship-Owners Society of London, being requested by the ship-owners of Liverpool and of South Shields, as well as by my own constituents, to support these petitions, and most strenuously to oppose the measure proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, now the subject of debate, and having, also, in the course of this debate, been personally alluded to by my hon. Friend, the Member for the city of London, and my hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax, I trust I may be allowed to occupy for a short time the attention of the House on the observations I am about to offer on the question of the sugar duties, as that appears to me likely to affect the interest with which I am most connected, viz. the shipping interests of this country. My hon. Friend, the Member for London, has expressed his astonishment that there should be any opposition on the part of that interest to the importation of Brazil sugar, inasmuch as he is of opinion, that any additional import from thence would give increased employment to British tonnage, my reply to this is short and I tell my hon. Friend, that, as by law every pound of sugar imported into Great Britain for home consumption when brought from our

own colonies must be imported under a British flag, and being well assured, that if there is any scarcity of production in the West Indies, it can be amply supplied from the borders of the Ganges; where to use an expression of a witness examined before a committee that sat on East-India produce, the Secretary of the Treasury, long resident in India, a most intelligent and capable witness; "that there was no limit to the cultivation and production of sugar in the East Indies." I tell the hon. Member, that I am not willing to relinquish the substance for the sake of the shadow, and so long as the British ship enjoys this privilege, I am unwilling to forego it for any problematical and uncertain advantage that may be held out to me from the promoters of the importation of sugar from any slave-labour country. So much, Sir, for my duty to my constituents; and I now turn to the duty I owe to myself and to the dictates of my own conscience. I cannot, Sir, forget; that six years ago I stated to the electors of the borough I have the honour to represent, my firm and unalterable determination to support any measure proposed by any Government that would tend to extinguish slavery all over the world. Without this pledge given at that period of great excitement by almost every Member who was returned to the first reformed Parliament, few indeed of the present Members of this House would have the opportunity of sitting here to record their opinions for or against this important question now before it, but I ask myself, with what propriety or honour can I repudiate to my constituents, when I next appear before them, the sentiments and declarations I made to them in 1832. No, Sir, whatever may be the consequence I will not violate my word: I have not changed my opinion, that slavery is a great evil. I think it will be perpetuated by the measure offered to the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I will be no party to such a proposition as will encourage slave-labour in any part of the world, when I know, that sugar may be produced in any quantity by free labour and by our own subjects. My hon. Friend, the Member for Halifax (and no one knows better the value of British ships and British sailors) has expressed with his usual courtesy, but, to my surprise, his wonder, that I should feel alarmed about the next great measure that is to be proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the subject of the timber duties; it will only, says my hon. Friend, go to

destroy a few old rotten ships. This opinion, and the estimate taken by him of the value of British sailors, reminds me of the same opinion expressed by Shylock, where he says—

"Ships are but boards, sailors are but men,  
They are no security for my bond."

But I will venture to tell my hon. Friend, and I will venture to tell this House; that British ships are something better than boards, and that British sailors are something more than men. Sir, I appeal to the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in corroboration of this assertion, and I ask the noble Lord; if he has not found it so on the coast of Syria; and I ask him, if the service of British admirals, captains, and sailors were not of material assistance to him in carrying into effect his able diplomacy on the Eastern question. Sir, I have sat on the committee on timber duties, where that question was so thoroughly investigated in 1835. I was on the committee on Import duties last year, and when this subject of timber is brought forward; I shall then ask the House to grant me the indulgence of delivering my sentiments on the resolutions of those committees, and on which the present propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer appear to be founded: I know, Sir, that we have been told, that when our Friends on this side of the House come into power they will adopt the same course of proceeding with regard to the duties on sugar and timber, without reference to the injury that may be sustained by the ship-owners of England. I know not, Sir, what the party may do (to which I give my humble support) when in office, but this I do know and believe, that the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, will bring in no measure so injurious to Canada against the opinion of the Governor General of that province. I conclude, Sir, by expressing my hope, that the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, will not persevere in any measure of which the result will be the annihilation of the British mercantile marine, and destruction to the employment of so many ships and so many sailors as such a proposed alteration in the timber duties will be sure to produce, and with every expression of personal respect for that noble Lord's character, although a firm opponent to his general policy, I warn him and I entreat him in the words of a great statesman, "that he will not, for the sake of putting a pepper-corn into the Exchequer, run the risk of de-



stroying the best and most important interests of the British Empire." I shall vote, Sir, for the motion of my noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool.

Sir E. L. Bulwer said, that the extreme length to which this debate had been protracted, had, at all events, as it appeared to him, answered the purpose of rendering the principle at issue intelligible. He had listened to the proposition which had been made by the Government, as well as to the arguments which had been brought forward in opposition to it, but he thought, that the question appeared to have been discussed upon two entirely different grounds. First, it had been attempted to be placed upon what was called a high and noble ground, and it was laid down as a broad and general principle that we should not permit the introduction of slave-grown sugars under any conditions. The hon. Member for Antrith had fairly and truly said, that he believed that a monopoly must be sustained; he said, that it was no matter whether they admitted the slave-labour sugar of Cuba, or the free-labour sugar of our own colonies, but that it was to the importation of other sugar than their own, and to an interference with their monopoly, that the West-India proprietors really objected. The hon. Member had thrown down the flimsy veil which had been attempted to be cast around this subject, and he had put the question fairly before the country when he said, that it was one of monopoly only. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, said last night, that he could not place the question upon the same high ground as that on which the hon. Member for Oxford and other hon. Gentlemen had attempted to place it. He had said distinctly, that to do so would be to insulate ourselves from the commercial relations of the world, and he had placed the whole of the opposition to the Government measure upon the object, not of principle, but of money. It might well be a ground for complaint, that by the resolution of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, a declaration of principle was effected, but was not actually made. It might be argued, that the effect of that resolution was, that so long as it was convenient to turn out one Government it must be all humanity; but there was nothing in that resolution, or in the speech of the noble Lord last night, which would prevent them from abandoning those principles which they now contended for, when, at a future time, their object was to

keep in another. It was said, that the importation of foreign sugar would operate as an encouragement to slavery and the slave-trade; but how was it, he asked; that they could account for the very remarkable fact, that that very sugar was now imported to this country for the purpose of exportation, which our own population were forbidden to use? Though hon. Gentlemen might dislike the term hypocritical, as applied to those West-Indian proprietors who were seized with such a sudden horror of slave-grown sugar, he asked, what it could be called but hypocrisy, when a state of things like this should be allowed to exist, that when, although the introduction of such sugar might be countenanced as being applicable to foreign consumption, they would not permit any portion of the sugar introduced to be used for the wants of our own population. If this were not hypocrisy, he knew not what was. So far as the question really at issue went, he thought, that it was a question only of application of a principle, and not of the principle itself; the real question was, whether they would proceed to procure their object by opening a market, or by maintaining and invigorating a market already existing. The people of England, he thought, neither could nor would understand the subtle distinction attempted to be drawn between the exportation of slave-grown sugar and the retaining of a smaller portion of that which was imported for the purpose of supplying the wants of our own countrymen. Where was the true principle if they did not render it applicable to all classes of articles? But if they permitted the introduction of one article the produce of slave-labour, he could not see why any distinction should be drawn by which others were shut out. The only answer which had been afforded to this suggestion had been given by the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, by the right hon. Member for Newark, and the noble Lord last night; and each of them had argued, that it was not because one article was introduced; that all should be so; but if this principle could not be carried out as to the great articles of trade, why, he asked, should it be applied to any? more especially when the House said, that there was no alternative but to take the course which was now proposed by the Government, or to submit to the imposition of new taxes on an already over-taxed and oppressed people. Being a Member representing an agricultural constituency, and entertaining, as he always

had, even before he had the honour of appearing in that House as the representative of that constituency, a very strong feeling with regard to an adequate degree of protection afforded to the landed interest, he might be permitted to say a few words further upon this subject. Undoubtedly, he was in favour of protection in preference to prohibition. He believed, that the land was entitled to an adequate share of protection, and he confessed he was not satisfied with the degree of protection which the noble Lord proposed to afford. But, entertaining these feelings, and not being thoroughly convinced, that such a sufficient protection was proposed to be given, but, at the same time, possessing a strong opinion, that the moment had arrived when some change was desirable, he did not see how these sentiments obliged him to band himself with the friends of all monopoly whatsoever. He believed, too, that the agricultural interests needed no such alliance, but that the demands of their case would place them upon such a footing as that they would suffer no injustice at the hands of the House.

Mr. *Hume* said, he was anxious to state the opinion which he entertained upon the subject now before the House. It was a subject to which he had given a great deal of attention, and he had endeavoured to make himself fully acquainted with it. He assured the House, that no man had ever entered upon an enquiry with a greater desire to ascertain the truth than he had done in reference to this question, the duties on Customs' imports. Ever since he had had the honour of holding a seat in that House (which was a period of more than thirty years) he never had given a vote the tendency of which was not to free the commerce of the country from its shackles and restrictions, and thereby to give the talents and capital of England their full scope and operation. It was on that true Radical principle, that he, as an advocate of free trade, had acted, and he would also say, that he had never given a vote which did not go equally to the extension of popular rights, and to shake off the oppression of the aristocracy. Four nights of the debate had now passed, and he was pleased to think, that the information which had been elicited would be of great importance to many hon. Members who had not sufficiently considered the subject before; but, above all, it would afford highly important information to the country at large;—it would shew what

were the real sentiments of the majority of that House; and if they had a little further discussion, he thought, that notwithstanding the attempt of the hon. Gentlemen opposite to mystify the question, the country would be made aware of the real merits of the plan submitted to the House by the Government, as well as of its demerits. Two nights had passed without the possibility of its being ascertained what hon. Members opposite intended to do, or what object they had in view in refusing to go into a Committee to consider the existing laws on the importation of sugar, except that of refusing to afford any relief to the people by the reduction of taxation, and at the same time of turning out the present Ministry. The hon. Member for Dover, indeed, had wittily and frankly said, that the result of the discussion was of little importance except so far as it tended to secure this end. No doubt that was the opinion of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Of course, they being patriots and friends of humanity could have no other object but that of the strongest desire to place able and talented men in the Government in lieu of those who now so inefficiently occupied its benches. The speeches of the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn) on the third night of the debate, and the noble Lord (Lord Stanley) the Member for North Lancashire, on the fourth night of the debate, had tended in some degree to draw aside the veil which had before hung over the proceedings of the Tory party, and had shown that their object was to obtain place, and to do nothing for the country, and as regarded sugar, they intended "to let things alone." At first an attempt had been made to limit the question, which he did not hesitate to say was of the very highest importance to the country; he would add even more important to the industrious classes than any other question which had been brought forward during the time he had sat in Parliament, to the narrow point connected with sugar only. But he was not disposed to confine himself to the narrow discussion of such a question merely. The noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies had been accused of bringing forward the question without any necessity, and at a time which was very ill-chosen. He had expected from hon. Gentlemen who had brought forward this charge of want of necessity, that if there was any one question of more importance than another in

their views, it would have been the maintenance of faith with the public creditors of this country, and to provide so as to enable us to pay all just demands. He would not enter at present into how or wherefore the great expense had been incurred—or into the policy of the lavish expenditure, by increase of the naval and military establishments, which left the country two millions and a-half in debt; but he would only say in passing, that there was no hon. Member opposite disproved more of the course which had been taken, and which had changed a surplus revenue of one million and a-half sterling to a deficient revenue of two millions and a-half sterling, than he did. He had done all that he could when the estimates were before the House to prevent it, but it was neither the one side nor the other of the House which had produced this result, but both sides had urged on an unnecessary and lavish expenditure by an increase of our establishments which had led to the present state of things. And he would here once for all take the opportunity of noticing the blame which had been cast upon the Government for having established the Penny Postage, and thereby diminished the revenue of the Post-office. That charge of blame afforded to his (Mr. Hume's) mind clear evidence of the ignorance of hon. Members on that subject. The adoption of the Penny Post had not diminished our general revenue. The revenue of the United Kingdom had been higher during the last three years than in the three years preceding. In order to dispel the unfair statements which had been put forth from time to time on this subject he would refer to a return—(Parliamentary paper, 268 of 1841)—which had been laid upon the Table of the House, the substance of which ought to be better known than it was. From that return it appeared, that the net income from the ordinary revenues was—

In the year ending 5th	Yearly Average.
January. . . . . 1836 46,270,828 } £	
" " " " " 1837 46,340,955 } £	46,292,432
" " " " " 1838 46,873,505 } £	
" " " " " 1839 47,607,209 } £	47,503,533
" " " " " 1840 47,685,223 } £	
" " " " " 1841 47,918,178 } £	

Shewing an increase of revenue of 675,101*l.*, in each of the three last more than in the three first years. A proof that the aggregate amount of the revenue had not diminished, as the revenue from the Post-office had been decreased. [An. Hon.

Member: What was the amount of the Post-office revenue?] He had included that revenue in the amount which he had referred to. Hon. Gentlemen did not appear to know what the aggregate amount was. They seemed to think, that because there was a reduction in the revenue in one article, it could not be made up by another. Besides the loss of revenue from the Post-office, there had been a deficiency also in the revenue from sugar last year, amounting to 1,000,000*l.*, and which had effected the aggregate of the revenue as much as the Post-office. It would appear that there had been no remission of taxes which was more likely to benefit the country, looking at it as promoting commerce, science and morals than the reduction of the postage. By the reduction of the rates of postage, 100 millions more of letters had been written and had passed to different parts of the country in one year than before; and he would ask whether such an increase of the correspondence of the country could take place without producing great advantages in every way? The increase of the revenue for the last three years over the three preceding years, having been annually 675,000*l.*, notwithstanding the reduction of taxation, shewed the tendency of the revenue to increase in other branches after reduction in any one. It reflected discredit on that House, as keepers of the public purse, to have allowed the revenue so increased to be exceeded by the expenditure for establishments so large; those large establishments however had been sanctioned by the House; the House had approved of those high estimates for the current year; they had been carried by large majorities. In the last four years we had incurred a debt for these increased establishments of from five to six millions; and in the present year we had still further increased them by one million and a half. He therefore certainly expected that the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), and the noble Lord (Lord Sandon) opposite to admit, that this was not an improper time, whoever might be Minister, to consider how this deficiency was to be made up. He had heard a taunt thrown out against Ministers, that this measure was brought forward without one consideration, and as a mere matter of political expediency for the moment; and what was the proof? It was said, that last year a motion was made by the hon. Member for Wigan, to reduce the duty on foreign sugar to 36*s.*; he had had the

pleasure of supporting that motion, and he had regretted the opposition then given; and now it was taken for granted, that as the Government had voted against that measure last Session, they were prevented from bringing forward the same measure in this. Now, he looked only to the value of the proposed measure. He cared not whether it was the result of the deliberation of a day, a week, or a year; he thought that it was a measure that was called for in justice to the people, and he should therefore give it his zealous support. When, however, her Majesty's Ministers were taunted with a change of opinion on the subject, he could look back to many changes in the opinions of hon. Members opposite that had been much greater, and in shorter periods; and he never would taunt hon. Members with a change in their opinion and measures that was likely to do good. When the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, came forward in 1839 and seconded the efforts of the Duke of Wellington to effect Catholic emancipation, which the right hon. Baronet had always strenuously opposed, did he blame the right hon. Baronet? Not at all; he always gave him great credit for his proceedings on that very important occasion. The right hon. Baronet had acted as he hoped he ever would act, for the public welfare; he yielded to the exigencies of the time. Let hon. Members read the letter of the right hon. Baronet, of the 25th of August, 1839, in which he stated the reasons for his course, and that he would rather have retired from Parliament, than have assisted in carrying the measure of emancipation, which he believed would be prejudicial in its operation; but in deference to the opinions of the noble Duke, who had stated, that rather than have one day of civil war in Ireland, he would carry that or any other measure which he thought calculated to secure the peace of the country. He could mention many other changes of policy in that House by former Ministers; and he was surprised that the noble Lord (Lord Stanley) should make such a charge of inconsistency of conduct against Ministers, when it was well known that the noble Lord had made more sudden changes, and those without sufficient reason than any other man since he (Mr. Hume) had been in Parliament. He need only refer to one. When the noble Lord brought in the Irish Tithe Bill, in 1833, there was a clause (No. 147) for appropriating the surplus of Church pro-

perty to public uses, which would be ever memorable in that House; on a division that clause was carried by a majority of upwards of 300, and yet in the course of forty-eight hours the noble Lord came down and called on the House to reject that very clause, on stating, that in the interval he has changed his opinion. There were many other instances of the noble Lord's political inconsistency, which he could state, and yet the noble Lord, forgetting what he had done himself, came forward and charged that (the Ministerial) side of the House with tergiversation and vacillating conduct. The noble Lord seldom spoke without due deliberation and preparation; and when he charged his late Friends with tergiversation, he (Mr. Hume) must say, that the noble Lord was the last man who ought to make such a charge. Did he blame him for that change of opinion? No, but he did blame him for challenging and accusing others for doing that which he had himself so often done. Her Majesty's Ministers had been further charged, that they had brought forward the reduction of duty on foreign sugar at an inopportune time. It was clear that some measure must be adopted for raising a deficient revenue. If he could have induced hon. Members to act with him, he would have cut down the expenditure very soon, by reducing the large and unnecessary military establishments; but the House had determined that the estimates were necessary and proper, and they therefore ought to provide the means of paying for them. There never had been a period, during the long time that he had been a public man, in which there was a greater degree of distress among the working classes than at the present moment; when our manufacturers were more pressed to keep their works going; when trade was more paralyzed, or when there was more difficulty of carrying on business without loss. He had seen letters from different parts of the country, stating the stoppage of the work of mills to four days a week in many places; and that some had been shut up altogether. He had supported the Poor-law bill by which the working classes were thrown upon their resources, to provide for themselves by their own industry, and yet an act of Parliament prevented their obtaining employment. Parliament, by laws, had prohibited the import of food except at exorbitant prices, which restricted the foreign trade of the country and deprived the people of the means by

which they could obtain employment, and they were left to the workhouse as their only resource. There were no signs of the times that ought to be more attended to than these of a starving discontented population. Was there any thing in the state of London that ought to attract attention? The late Governor of the Bank (Sir John Reid) had been very facetious last night, and had told them that there was no despondency, yet in the same breath he said that there was no buying and selling, and no one knew where he could make a shilling. Was that an usual occurrence, and was it the way in which the commerce of this country could be maintained? The distress had not yet reached the landed interest, because the landlords were fattening upon the other classes, and it was to maintain their high rents and luxury that these laws were upheld. He maintained, then, that the time was come when the House ought to apply a remedy, and he was only sorry that it had been delayed so long. He was confident that if her Majesty's Government at the commencement of the present Session had been acquainted with the great and increasing distress that existed, and with the real state of the commerce of the country, they would sooner have brought forward these remedial measures. He would not, however, throw out any reflections on that account against Ministers, but would express his great satisfaction that now they had proposed these excellent measures for the purpose of finance, and as part of what they intended to bring forward to remove as speedily as possible the distress of the country. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, admitted that the deficiency should be made up, but neither he nor any one on the opposite side had informed the House by what method that deficiency was to be made up. Perhaps this might be the proper parliamentary course, but he thought that when the proposal of the Ministers was to be rejected, that in the circumstances in which the country was now placed, some proposal ought to have been made by those who rejected it. The hon. Member for Whitby (Mr. Chapman) had said that he (Mr. Hume) was a free-trader, and was for buying in the cheapest and selling in the dearest market. That was his opinion, and he entirely agreed in the definition of 'free-trade' given by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire; but unfortunately for the country, prohibitions and restrictions existed to a great extent; and

the measure of her Majesty's Ministers was an approximation only to free-trade, he hoped further that it would be ere long the rule of Parliament that there should be no taxation except for the purposes of the revenue of the country; for he held that no money ought, by what is called 'protection,' to be taken out of the pockets of one individual to go into the pockets of any other individual as that was highly unjust; and he held, further, that they ought, for the purposes of revenue, to place the smallest possible amount of duty even upon those articles which were for the consumption of the mass of the people, and of course upon food. Let him ask, however, whether such was the case at the present moment? And here he must say, that the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire had properly taunted her Majesty's Government for claiming the merit of a measure of free-trade, if they continue to lay a greater rate of duty upon goods coming from one part than upon those coming from another, where, he would ask, was the free-trade? It was not free-trade—it was only an approximation to free-trade. The proposal of a noble Lord (Lord John Russell) still maintained protection; it was therefore only a reduction of the present high duties to others of a smaller amount; and if the noble Lord near him had come forward and claimed for his measure the merit of free-trade, he agreed with the noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley) that he was not entitled to do so. But the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, in the able speech which he had debated on introducing the motion, had claimed no such merit, he had been perfectly candid. He had admitted that the principle he was advocating was not a new one; that it had been brought forward by Mr. Huskisson and acted upon by that gentleman with great benefit to the country. He did not claim the merit of introducing any new plan, he said only that in the present measure he had been contented to follow the good example of Mr. Huskisson in taking away prohibition and substituting protection, leaving the question to be decided in the committee whether that protection was sufficient or not; and the noble Lord had said, further, that he would be content to give all the credit to Mr. Huskisson, and to his friends, if he were only allowed and assisted by them to carry out his present proposal. These were the principles propounded in the masterly speech of the noble Secretary for the Colo-

nies, and he only regretted that a result would not follow so speedily as the state of the country required, and equal to the merits of that exposition. There was no claim to a system of free-trade in that speech; why, then, should the noble Lord be taunted with bringing forward a proposal for free-trade? He wished that there had been a proposal for the removal of all restrictions and protections; and he was satisfied, that ere long they must come to free-trade. He would not only address himself to the statements of the hon. Member for Antrim, or of the noble Lord (Lord Sandon) with regard to sugar, but he would refer to the memorial of the Council and Assembly of Jamaica as that plainly stated what they required. They stated, that they "had heard, that the prohibitory duty on foreign sugar was to be withdrawn;" thus admitting that there was a prohibitory duty. The right hon. Member for Cambridge had beat about the bush, but the Council demanded prohibition and nothing else; for they went on to state, "that the admission into the home market of sugar, not the produce of her Majesty's colonies would oblige those colonies to enter into competition with other colonies possessing advantages superior, and that such a competition would be fruitless." These were the statements of the friends of the hon. Member for Antrim, who had informed the House, that the colonies must have prohibition, as also their new ally, the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, had stated last year. The conduct of that right hon. Member was the more extraordinary, as he had agreed to resolutions and had maintained, that free labour was more profitable than slave labour. At the public meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, in Exeter Hall, on the 18th of June, 1840, the following resolutions were agreed to:—

1. That upon the evidence of facts to which the attention of this convention has been directed, it is satisfactorily established, as a general axiom, that free labour is more profitable to the employer, and consequently cheaper than slave-labour."

"That of all kinds of slave labour, that of imported slaves has been demonstrated to be most costly and least productive."

He was pleased to be able to inform the House that he (Mr. H.) had this day received from five anti-slavery associations in different parts of the kingdom assurances, that the conduct of the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets

(Dr. Lushington) had given dissatisfaction, and complaining that he had acted rashly in joining the sugar planters in the anti-slavery cry, and in resisting the proposal of Ministers. The Ministers had come forward, not to make this a question of sugar, or timber, or corn, but as he (Mr. Hume) believed to revise the whole tariff, and by reduction of duties on these three principal articles of import to make up the deficiency of the revenue. The President of the Board of Trade had not done his duty to the cause in not explaining to the House what he meant to do on the whole subject—whether he meant to revise the entire tariff. At present, therefore, the House was proceeding somewhat in the dark, and that he considered to be a mistake of Ministers. Even before this debate terminated, he had hopes that the right hon. Gentleman, (the President of the Board of Trade) would supply the defect by explaining fully the intentions of Ministers with regard to all other articles now subject to high duties. They ought to carry out their principles as far as possible, to free-trade from protective duties, and finish their work as well as they had begun it. He did not approve of the rates of duty fixed on sugar, being of opinion that they had not sufficiently lowered the duty on colonial sugar, and that they ought to reduce it to 18s. or 20s., the amount existing in 1801. The country should understand that the object of Ministers was to raise money without new taxations; and what was the object of their opponents?—to continue protection, or in other words, to tax the consumer of sugar, and of corn, for the sake of the planter and owner of the soil. This protection tax was not for any general, or national purpose, but to fill the pockets of the planters and landlords, who were thus to be supported at the expense of the rest of the community. He would prove, before he sat down, that the reduction on sugar would be not a centesimal part of the farthing, as some Members asserted, but a substantial two or three pence in the pound weight, so that the benefit to the consumer would be important. To revert to remarks on corn, by the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Captain Hamilton), who had stated that cheap bread necessarily implied low wages; whilst he asserted that all experience showed that the fact was directly the reverse for whenever bread was cheap, wages were high, and artisans had work, food, lodging and clothing. This held good in England, but the strongest proof was to be found in

the United States of America, where food was cheap, and wages high. He would show, that upon every quarter of wheat at the time he spoke, by the *Gazette* price, a tax of not less than 23s. was paid to the landlord. Yet the landed aristocracy pretended to be extraordinarily humane, and cried out in high places, "God forbid that we should tax the bread of the people!" Five millions of men, the industrious classes, had no voice in the House of Commons, and hence the manner in which the people were taxed by the landed aristocracy. It was for the serious consideration of the country, that whilst the whole revenue of the country for the support of the army, navy, and public establishments was fifty millions, not less than fifty millions more were extorted in the shape of the bread-tax by landlords. The amount of fifty millions sterling was on the calculation that was raised, 10s. per quarter by the monopoly; but if 20s. per quarter of increased price were paid to the landlord, (and he believed it amounted to at least that sum), the bread-tax upon the nation would not be less than one hundred millions a year. The hon. Member for Newark had talked very pathetically of grinding the bones and sinews of the negroes in Cuba and the Brazils into gold; but had he no compassion for the labouring classes of this country, whose bones and sinews were ground into by the bread-tax, to add to the expenditure of the landlords? [*"Hear," and some confusion.*] He was sure, that those who made this disturbance were landlords; the authors of the evils of which he complained, who did not like to be thus reminded of the effect of their monopoly of food. He asserted, that but for the Corn-laws, the trade of the country would at this time be most flourishing. The accursed Corn-laws interfered in every way with the comfort and happiness of the people—they prevented them from exchanging their labour for food—they prevented them from getting work and wages, and thereby many were obliged to lie down and die while the landlords stood over them contented and satisfied. This was not a matter to be treated with levity, it was highly unbecoming in any man so to conduct himself, when the sufferings of his fellow-creatures were described, and especially if he by bad laws was the cause of such sufferings. He should like to see the hon. Member for Newark, and others who had spoken so pathetically of the cruelty to the slaves extend a little of their sympathy towards the industrious and oppressed

classes of their fellow men more starving in some parts of the country. The next sufferers were the merchants and manufacturers; and the farmers were also beginning to open their eyes and to be aware of the delusion practised upon them by supporting the Corn-laws. The Duke of Buckingham here stated, that the farmers were men without guile; he wished he could say as much for the landlords; they had contrived to impose for a long while upon their tenants by persuading them that the Corn-laws were for their benefit alone; but those tenants were gradually becoming sensible of the manner in which they had been imposed upon—that the Corn-laws had put money into the pockets of the owners of the soil often to the injury of the farmer, and to the constant and great injury of the rest of the community. As he had already said, not less than fifty millions on the estimate of 10s. per quarter of advanced price were annually taken out of the pockets of the consumers that it might be put into the pockets of the rich. The consequence of this heavy landlord's tax was, that much difficulty was found in collecting the taxes for the service of the State; and hence, in truth, the failure of the budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of last year. He desired the House and the country to know, that, what was called protection was only another word for taxation; but he trusted that the people, and even the farmers, were no longer to be deceived by these words. What was the object of the Ministerial measure? On the Ministerial side of the House, the object was to reduce the burdens of the people: on the Opposition side, the struggle was to increase them, not for the general purposes of the nation at large, but to enable planters and landlords to keep up their expensive establishments. He had made a calculation of the amount of the tax which the people had paid to the planters on the sugar, molasses, and coffee, consumed by them in the last year (1840) amounting to between five and six millions, by what is called 'protection on sugar and coffee alone.'

The quantity of sugar consumed was in cwt. 3,594,834\*, and the price in bond was on an average of the whole year 49s. 1d. per cwt.; whilst the price of foreign sugar in bond was 21s. 6d. per cwt., shewing the difference in price per cwt. of 27s. 7d., which amounted in the year to . . . £4,957,875

\* (P. P. 290 of 1841.)

The quantity of molasses consumed was 423,126 cwt.,\* and the difference in bond between the price of foreign and of British molasses was 14s., making an increase of price to the consumer of

£296,188

The quantity of coffee consumed was 28,723,735 lbs.,† the protection duty of 3d. per lb. and 1d. expense of extra freight to the Cape of Good Hope, making an increase of price of 4d. per lb. being on the whole quantity

£478,728

Making by protection an additional tax on the consumer, on these three articles of

£5,732,791

besides a loss to the revenue of between three and 400,000*l.* by the decreased consumption of sugar which the people must make up by other taxes. The effects of monopoly of sugar were clearly proved by the statement he held in his hand.

The consumption in the United Kingdom was—

	in 1821	in 1840
of tea	26,386,873 lbs.	and 32,262,905 lbs.
of coffee	7,593,000 lbs.	and 28,723,735

lbs. 33,979,873	lbs. 60,986,640
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being an increase of consumption of 80 per cent., notwithstanding the interruption of supply often from China with increased price.

The consumption of sugar in 1821 was 3,056,882 cwt., and if there had been an increase of 80 per cent, 2,445,506 cwt., the rate of income of tea and coffee 5,502,387 cwt., would have been the quantity consumed, whereas only 3,594,834 cwt., or 15 per cent. increase were consumed. If the increase had been the same as coffee and tea, viz. 80 per cent., the increase of revenue to the Government would have been 2,394,000*l.* at 24s. duty; and more, if foreign sugar at 36s. per cwt. had made any part of that increase. In the consumption of tea and coffee, there had been an increase of 80 per cent., while on sugar, under the protective duties, there had only been an increase of 15 per cent. And, it is therefore evident, that tea and coffee have been largely used without sugar. The consumption of sugar has decreased during the last forty years, as the duty had increased. In 1801, when the duty was 20s., the consumption was 28½ lbs. per head; in 1811, when the duty had been increased, the consumption, al-

lowing for the increase of population in the interval, was only 22½ lbs. per head; in 1821, it had dropped down to 21½ lbs. per head; in 1831, when the price was low, (only 47s.) the consumption rose to the rate of 23½ lbs. per head; but in 1840, the consumption decreased to 14½ lbs. per head. Such had been the effect of the prohibitive duties on the consumption of sugar; whilst the consumption of coffee had increased in consequence of the admission of foreign-grown coffee into the home-market, though at 50 per cent. increase of duty. Had foreign-grown sugar been admitted, the same result would have followed, and the deficiency of the revenue would have been supplied. He held in his hand tables prepared to prove these assertions. The probable result of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget for raising 700,000*l.* a-year by admitting foreign sugar at a duty of 36s. per cwt., or 12s. more than British colonial sugar, may be demonstrated by what has actually taken place in the consumption and duty on the article of coffee, another colonial article. The duty of 1s. 3d. per pound on foreign coffee had been, nearly a prohibitive duty (as 63s. per cwt. has been of sugar) until, in 1838 it was discovered, that by landing foreign coffee at the Cape of Good Hope, and obtaining a certificate of the same, the coffee could be admitted to British consumption at a duty of 9d. per lb., or 50 per cent more duty than on British colonial coffee, although the circuitous voyage from Hayti or Brasil to the Cape occasioned an increase of freight and charges of about 1d. per lb., yet the importation has been carried on to a large extent, with benefit to the consumer and to the public revenue, as appears by the following account:—

*The amount of gross revenue from coffee consumed in the United Kingdom, in each of the four years 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, was:—*

	1837.	1838.	1839.	1840.
Of British growth at 6d. per lb. .	599,400	565,246	451,860	374,736
Of Foreign growth via. C. of Good Hope, 9d. per lb. and 1d. charge . . .	230 (1.)	121,072 (2.)	327,693 (3.)	546,106 (4.)
Making the yearly Revenue from Coffee . .	£209,870	£206,319	£779,553	£720,842

(1.) P. P. 28. 1839.  
(2.) P. P. 80. 1840.

(3.) P. P. 61. 1841.  
(4.) Ditto.

\* (P. P. 61 of 1841.)

† (P. P. 61 of 1841.)



By this statement it will be seen, that if no foreign coffee had been admitted, there would have been a loss of revenue on coffee of 324,664*l.* sterling in the year 1840 as compared with the year 1837 (which is the amount of the decrease of the duty on British coffee in those three years). But that, by the admission of foreign coffee at a protective duty of 3*d.* per lb. or 50 per cent., the aggregate revenue on coffee has been increased in these three years 223,232*l.* Thus, by allowing foreign coffee to fill up the deficient supply of the British colonial coffee, the duty on foreign coffee increased 547,896*l.* sterling, whilst the duty on British coffee fell off 324,664*l.* sterling. He (Mr. Hume) asserted that the same results would be produced by admitting foreign sugar at 36*s.* to fill up the deficiency of the British colonial sugar. He would read a statement to show the quantity of British colonial sugar, East and West Indies and Mauritius, consumed (per P. P. 290, 1841) in the United Kingdom. It was as follows:—

1837.	1838.	1839.	1840.
Cwts. 3,954,810	Cwts. 3,909,665	Cwts. 3,823,590	Cwts. 3,594,834
And the deficiency of the supply in these years . . . . .	45,145	129,211	116
Cwts. 3,954,810	3,954,810	3,954,810	3,954,810

If this deficiency of supply of British colonial sugar in the year 1838, viz. 45,145 cwts., had been made up by the admission of foreign sugar at 36*s.* per cwt., the revenue would have been viz:—

In the year 1838, the actual revenue from British sugar at 24*s.* per cwt., was - - - - £4,656,892

And if the deficient supply of 45,145 cwts. had been made up by foreign sugar at 36*s.* per cwt., there would have been added to the revenue - - - - 81,261

And the revenue of the year would have been - - £4,738,153

In the year 1839, the actual revenue from sugar was - - £4,586,936

And if the deficiency of colonial sugar of 29,211 cwts. had been made up by foreign sugar at 36*s.* per cwt., there would have been added - - - - 232,579

And the revenue of the year would have been - - £4,819,515

In the year 1840, the actual receipt for sugar duty was - £4,449,070  
And if the deficiency of colonial sugar of that year of 359,976 cwts. had been made up by foreign at 36*s.*, there would have been added - - - - 647,956

And the revenue of the year would have been - - £5,097,026

Thus supposing no increase in the consumption of sugar to have taken place in the years 1838, 1839, or 1840, but that it had remained stationary, the deficiency being supplied by foreign sugar at 36*s.* per cwt. the revenue would have been 5,097,026 in 1840, instead of 4,449,070*l.* which was a clear proof that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have received in the last year nearly the sum he estimates for the ensuing year. And if the consumption had increased in a small degree, as coffee and tea did, the revenue would have been larger. By the last advices it appeared almost a certainty that the crop of sugar in Demerara and the rest of the West-India Islands for the current year would be less than that of the last year. Government was therefore called upon to provide against the possibility of the price of sugar being this year as high as it was last year; and he considered that they were perfectly justified in resorting to the means which they now proposed to adopt for making up the revenue. He was willing to concede a fair protection to the West-India interest for some time, but the proposed duty instead of being a protection of 50 per cent., was, in reality, a protection of 80 per cent. Taking the price of West-India sugar at 61*s.*, as it had been stated to be by the hon. Member for Antrim, there would have to be deducted from that amount; first, 24*s.* and 5 per cent., or 25*s.* 2*d.* for the amount of duty paid, and a further sum of 7*s.* 10*d.* for insurance, freight, and other expenses, leaving a clear net price of 28*s.* for which the shipper in Jamaica could draw upon his agent. Then supposing foreign sugar to sell for the same price (61*s.*), there would have to be deducted, first, for duty, 36*s.* and 5 per cent., or 37*s.* 9*d.* For freightage, insurance, and other expenses, 7*s.* 10*d.*, the same amount as had been deducted upon the West-India grower's returns, which left to the foreign grower only 15*s.* 5*d.* If the Jamaica grower received 28*s.* net

returns, and the Cuba grower only 15s. 5d., this difference of 12s. 7d. on 15s. 5d. amounted to a protection of 81 per cent., which he thought was a sufficient protecting duty. For his part, he thought that this protecting duty ought not to be permanent, but it should be reduced by degrees. He had another proof to offer of the effect of the prohibitory duties in raising the price to the consumer. A paper which was laid on the Table of the House this Session (No. 290 of 1841) showed what the difference of price had been between British Muscovado sugar and Brazil sugar in bond. It appeared that from the year 1823 to 1835 the price of British colonial was 30s. 3d., and of Brazil 25s. 2d., per cwt., making the difference between these sugars in bond, taking the annual average, 5s. 7d.; and if the bounty upon West-India sugar when refined and exported was deducted, they would be found to have been at exactly the same price. During all this period there was a surplus of West-India sugar. But during the last five years, when the supply of West-India sugar was falling off, namely, from the years 1836 to 1840, he found that, in 1836 the difference was 12s. 1d.; in 1837, 13s. 4d.; in 1838, 12s. 5d.; in 1839, 17s. 1d.; and in 1840, the difference was 27s. 7d. In the last year, therefore, the people of this country paid in the shape of protection 3d. per pound upon sugar; but on the average of these five years, the price was 39s. 6d. for British Colonial, and 22s. 9d. for Brazil, and the difference 16s. 9d. per cwt. He would ask, ought such a state of things to be allowed to continue? The average difference of price by protection for these five years was 16s. 8d.; and the people of this country during that period had consumed 18,753,307 cwts. of sugar, and consequently had paid the enormous sum of 15,236,000*l.* taxation in the shape of protection to the sugar monopolists. If this was not plunder of the people, by law, he should like to know what was plunder. He would say, put an end to protection by degrees, if they would, but do it, and get out of a bad system into a good one. Looking at all our experience in the reduction of duties from the year 1815 to the present time, he defied any person to find an instance in which relaxation of protection (*i. e.* reduction of import duties) did not extend the commerce and promote the interests of the country and

the comforts of the consumer. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, had quoted a Liverpool price current. Why the very price currents denied the objections and arguments of the noble Lord. Why, he would ask, was it, that in the price current referred to by the noble Lord, it was stated that the measures announced by the Government could not be carried out? Why? Not because it was improper to reduce the duty, but because the whole landed interest was banded against them. He also would refer to a Liverpool price current of the 1st of May in the present year, in which he found the following statement:—

“ The able and enlightened views, however, of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as developed in the Budget of the 30th ult., give us every encouragement to anticipate the removal of those hindrances of wealth and prosperity, those checks to enterprise, those results of a cramped and ignorant policy—the heavy protective (alas! prohibitory) import duties. We may also hope for a moderate fixed, instead of a sliding scale of duty for wheat and flour, so as to admit a constant supply from the United States and the corn countries of Europe. A direct trade, which has been dormant for years, will also be opened with those states which formerly exported vast quantities of timber to this country, but now only know the country by name or the trade from tradition.

Was this to be interpreted as disapproving of the measures of Government? Quite the contrary; and he was sure, that the price current of every merchant unconnected with the monopolists, would state the same thing. Now, with respect to the remarks of the Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Colquhoun) he must say, that the hon. Gentleman was very inconsistent: no man indeed was more inconsistent in his statements, with the exception of the hon. Member for Beverly (Mr. Hogg). The hon. Member for Kilmarnock was, or pretended to be, a free trader, and said, he was anxious to get rid of monopoly; but greatly to his surprise, the hon. Member objected to the reduction of the duty on foreign sugar, and seemed to be delighted at the prospect of getting the present Government out of the Treasury Benches, which overcome the hon. Gentleman's love of free trade [“ *hear, hear* ”]. The hon. Member for Kilmarnock asked where were to be found those who called for an alteration of the Sugar-duties? Did the hon. Member ever read the petitions that

were presented to that House; if not, he did; and he could tell the hon. Member that scarcely a petition on the subject of the revision of the Tariff and measures proposed by Government was presented, that did not mention the article of sugar. The hon. Gentleman also said, let the merchants and manufacturers who demand cheap sugar come forward, and say that they required no protection for their own trade. Why, they had done so publicly, again, and again. Deputations from many towns had made that declaration. The town of Dundee had come to a resolution, which he held in his hand, that they were ready to give up all protection for the linen trade, their principal trade, and that they were ready to meet the whole world, if the Corn-laws were repealed. He was warranted in saying, that, looking at the distressed state of the country, at the unanimous wish of every merchant and manufacturer, looking at the deficiency of the revenue, the Government was justified in not simply attempting to restore the revenue, but in placing it on a more just and firm basis. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Stanley) had last night made a statement which would tell upon the country with as much effect as the famous declaration of the Duke of Wellington against Reform. The noble Lord used these words—

“He agreed that the seed which had now been sown would produce its fruit: but he feared that it would be the fruit of bitter animosity between the contending classes for many years; he feared that it would aggravate those jealousies and rivalries between the agricultural and manufacturing interests, which every former Government had sought rather to soothe and heal than to aggravate.”

He differed from the noble Lord in one part, and believed that many years would not elapse before the noble Lord would find out his mistake. He would find to his cost, as the Duke of Wellington did, that a famishing people were not easily restrained, [*“Pooh, pooh.”*] They might say “pooh, pooh,” but it only proved, that they had given little reflection to so serious a subject, and, thought nothing of those who were starving through their class and selfish legislation. The Government had begun late with their good measures, but it was never too late to do well. They had stated to the country what their plan was, and it now only remained for the President of the Board of Trade to explain

more fully what he meant to do in the revision of the tariff and in the reduction of the duties. There were many other articles besides sugar, timber, and corn, which it was necessary to deal with; and he would tell the Government that they must go through with the revision of all, there must be no compromise. They might talk of the thousands of slaves that were sacrificed in Cuba and Brazil to the Moloch of sugar, but look at the thousands of our own countrymen who were daily sacrificed to the Moloch of Corn-laws; and let the hon. Member for Newark look at the bones and sinews of the best portion of the people, ground down by poor-laws and protection, to pamper the appetites of the rich. The Government had been taught by long experience, that they must not seek support from the other side; the aristocracy were ready to trample upon them, let Ministers then take the part of the people, let them legislate for the benefit of the people at large and not allow the laws to favour the few—let them inscribe on their banners, “down with taxation for protection, down with the Corn-laws, down with all monopolies,” and the people would support them. He hoped, that although the noble Lord should lose this vote, he would not be alarmed, but still adhere to the views which he had so nobly expressed the other evening. Let the noble Lord stand by his colours, and he had no doubt that the people would support him and carry him triumphantly through in spite of all opposition.

Debate again adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, May 14, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—Exchequer Bills; Excise Collection and Management.—Read a third time:—Dublin Wide Streets; Arms (Ireland); Slave Compensation.

Petitions presented. By Earl Fitzwilliam, from Edinburgh, and the West Riding of York, for an Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Radnor, from Devizes, and other places, against Church Rates.—By the Duke of Argyll, and the Marquess of Downshire, from Newry, Cavan, Fife, and other places, for the Abolition of Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland.—By the Earl of Haddington, from a parish in the county of Oxford, for a Protection of Corn.—By the Bishop of Bangor, from Anglesea, against the Union of Bangor and St. Asaph.

THE LAW OF MARRIAGE.] Lord Wharncliffe had several petitions to present on the subject of which he had given notice a few nights ago, namely, the law relating to marriages within the prohibited degree. The first was from Leeds, and

was signed by the bankers, professional gentlemen, and a great number of the inhabitants of that town, and, as it contained in fact the whole case to which he was about to call their Lordships' attention, he begged to be permitted to read it to the House. The noble Lord then proceeded to read the petition. It stated, that the petitioners considered it important to society, that the laws relating to marriage should be certain and defined, and that no restriction should be imposed on marriage unless it were ordained by the laws of God and nature; that by the Act of the 5th and 6th of William 4th, it was enacted, that all existing marriages within the prohibited degree of consanguinity or affinity should be valid, but that all such marriages subsequent to that time should be void; that they were of opinion, that the restriction of marriages within some of those degrees which were considered as degrees of consanguinity, where no ties of blood consisted between the parties, were unnecessarily severe, and not sanctioned by divine law, or necessary to the well-being of society; that the present law was calculated to produce a great deal of affliction, and likely to lead in many cases to a total disregard of the institution of marriage and the bastardy of innocent offspring; that great doubt also existed as to the validity here of marriages within the prohibited degrees solemnised in any country where such restrictions did not exist; and they therefore prayed, that the act might be so far amended as to allow marriages to take place between parties who were not connected by consanguinity or lineal affinity. The petition was signed by the greater part of the solicitors of the town—a class of persons the most likely to be cognisant of the evils arising from the present state of the law. The noble Lord also presented petitions from Liverpool, Manchester, Maldon, Leicester, Birmingham, Hereford, Macclesfield, Rochford, Bristol, Bath, Cirencester, Norwich, Ashford, Worcester, Devonport, and Exeter, to the same effect; also, several petitions signed exclusively by Protestant Dissenting ministers, and others signed exclusively by solicitors to the same effect. Having now presented these petitions to the House, and submitted the statements which they contained to their Lordships' consideration, he should next endeavour to bring before the House the existing state of the

law, and at the same time make some attempt to induce them to consent to an alteration in that law. It appeared to him, that the subject which he was about to bring under their consideration was one of unusual importance. It was one which deeply interested their countrymen and likewise their countrywomen. He did not hesitate to say, that he thought the existing laws a great deal too stringent, and, whatever might be done, he did not think, that the law in its present form could be allowed to stand. He begged to remind their Lordships, that antecedently to the time of Henry 8th, while the Catholic faith prevailed in this country, the canon law was the only law of marriage. It was true, that that law embraced a variety of cases, but it was equally true, that the powers of dispensation exercised by the see of Rome, in some degree obviated the objections to so strict a code, though no doubt all men must condemn the abuse of those powers which then prevailed. The first English statute upon the subject was enacted in the reign of Henry 8th, but, as their Lordships were aware, he had his own reasons for causing laws to be passed on the subject. From the reign of that monarch, there was no law on the subject of marriage till the 4th and 5th of William 4th; and, notwithstanding the provisions of that statute, he must be allowed to say, that the existing state of the law was anything but defensible. On religious grounds, at all events, it was without the least support. He had spoken to many men upon the subject, and he never met with one who for a moment attempted to defend it upon religious grounds. After much reflection upon the subject, he did think, that the most just and the most expedient course would be to prohibit no marriages which did not shock the moral feelings of society at large, and which did not evidently appear contrary to the law of nature. He was as ready as any man to say, that the existing prohibitions affecting degrees of consanguinity ought to continue; but lineal affinity and collateral affinity were totally different matters. He admitted, that strong prejudices existed upon the subject, but he trusted, that noble Lords would exert a sound and dispassionate judgement upon a question of such high importance. Amongst the various cases to which the law of marriage referred, none excited more interest than that of a man marrying the sister of his

deceased wife; and, if the restriction respecting that were once removed, there would be no difficulty about the others. In the first place, he might be permitted to observe, that in this case there was no consanguinity, and if a man had several children, clearly no one could so properly fill the place of their deceased parent as the sister of that parent. It was said, that the removal of such a restriction might probably be productive of jealousy in families; he doubted, that that ought to be considered a valid objection. They had heard of men base enough to seduce their sisters-in-law, and of women whose minds were so depraved, that they readily yielded to the arts of seduction; but, in his judgment, occurrences so rare, found no sufficient ground for general legislation. He thought, that in considering enactments upon a subject so delicate and important as this, the House should look at the position in which parties were placed who stood towards each other in the relation of brother and sister-in-law. A man might be left a widower with a large family—the sister of his deceased wife might undertake the care of his children, and might live in his house for that purpose. Much worse consequences generally ensued from the law as it stood, than could possibly arise from its alteration. There was another matter which he thought should be provided for in any new law upon the subject, and that was the case of marriages contracted abroad within the degrees of consanguinity prohibited in this country. He had received a statement from Manchester, by which it appeared, that since the year 1835 no less than 91 marriages, in violation of the law, had taken place within the prohibitory degrees of affinity. Although it was declared a crime for a man to marry his deceased wife's sister, society appeared to think otherwise, for the parties who contracted such marriages were admitted into society, and were not thought to have acted improperly. The law on this subject was full of inconsistencies, for the list of prohibited marriages in the reign of Queen Anne, varied very much from that put forth by Archbishop Parker. Upon the continent these prohibitions were for the most part unknown, and even in those countries where marriages within certain degrees were forbidden, dispensations under particular circumstances were easily procured. In America, where the tone of

society was far more moral than elsewhere, no such prohibition was known. The noble Lord read a letter from an American judge, a gentleman well acquainted with that country, in which it was stated that such marriages were common in the United States, where no evil consequences resulted. He earnestly hoped, that their Lordships would consider the subject. All he asked for was inquiry. He was prepared, with the sanction of the House, to bring in a bill embodying his views on the subject. If he were permitted to do so, he pledged himself to prove satisfactorily to their Lordships, that not hundreds, but thousands of marriages within the degree of affinity, had taken place since the year 1835.

The Bishop of London: My Lords, it is not my intention to oppose the petitions being laid on the Table, nor have I any reason to complain of the manner in which the noble Lord has pleaded the cause of those who have entrusted him with these petitions. On the contrary, the temper and good feeling with which the noble Lord has discussed the subject, deserves my sincere acknowledgements; but, as a minister of that Church, whose laws are now impeached, and which I believe in my conscience, if they are overturned, will suffer materially, I feel myself bound to offer a few remarks on this occasion.

My Lords, one word before I enter on the subject matter of the petitions, as to the manner in which the petitions themselves have been obtained. It appears that a very large number of signatures, attached to these petitions, are the signatures of solicitors, a circumstance to which the noble Lord seemed to attach considerable weight, because they were described by him, to be the signatures of persons who were likely to be conversant with the evils which flowed from the present state of the law. My Lords, the fact is, that I believe there are persons who have contracted illegal marriages of the description to which the petitions refer, or who are placed in circumstances which make them desirous of contracting them, and they have determined to make a united effort to procure a repeal of the law to which these petitions advert. They have employed highly respectable solicitors to collect evidence, to procure petitions on their behalf, and they have also signed them; and the result is the roll of petitions which the noble Lord has this day laid before the

House. But, my Lords, it is obvious that this statement (which I know to be true, because it was made to me by a person engaged by these parties in procuring these petitions) somewhat lessens the weight which is to be attached to the signatures to these petitions. And I may be permitted to remark, that although that respectable body of men may be very competent judges of the effect produced by the law to which the petitioners refer, upon matters relating to property, they are not so well qualified to judge of its religious bearings as the clergy.

Then, my Lords, as to the signatures of the clergymen, which come, I believe, from two or three dioceses, they are, after all, not more than about 300 out of a body of 15,000; it cannot therefore be urged, that the clergy in general, or anything like a majority of them, are in favour of the abolition of these laws. I have looked at the signatures, my Lords, and I am quite sure that some of them have been attached without a clear understanding of the object which the petitioners had in view. But, my Lords, this in no way affects the merits of the case itself, to which I shall now shortly advert.

My Lords, I must notice one or two points in the noble Lord's address, which I must say do not evince a very accurate acquaintance with the law, as it relates to marriage. The noble Lord has spoken of the old canon law of the Romish Church. It is true, my Lords, that these prohibitions, and others, were contained in the canon law of the Romish Church; but the prohibitions which we still have in the Church, and which it is the object of these petitioners to abolish, are of a much earlier date than what is commonly understood by the term 'Canon law.' My Lords, the most important of them, and especially that, the removal of which, after all, is the object in view—for it is not to be disassembled from your Lordships, that the object in view is to legalise the marriage of a husband with a deceased wife's sister—that was prohibited by the Church from a very early date, a date long prior to the formation of what is, in the language of lawyers understood by the 'Canon law.' My Lords, it was, if not prohibited, at least condemned by implication in that very early body of Constitutions called the Apostolic Canons. It was forbidden by the Council of Eliberis early in the fourth century, a date long prior to that of the Decretals and other laws compiled by Gratian. So that, my Lords, when

we stand up for these prohibitions, we do not stand up for prohibitions merely adopted by our own Church from that of Rome. We think we are acting in conformity with the demands which the Church makes upon us, if we pause before we concede so important a point as the abolition of laws relating to the holy institution of marriage, which have been in force in the Christian Church almost since the time of the Apostles.

My Lords, the noble Lord spoke of the facility with which dispensations from these prohibitory laws are obtained in the Roman Church. Why, my Lords, if the restrictions themselves are right, the facility with which these dispensations may or might be obtained, is only a proof of what we consider to be the corrupt state of the Roman Church, and cannot be used against the restrictions themselves. The noble Lord spoke of restrictions of this kind as tending to demoralise the people, the same might be said of all prohibitory laws touching questions of morality or religion. A question might in every case be raised, how far you shall censure or disapprove of a law, because it may be said, in this sense to demoralise a country. The people who commit an *improper* act which is *not* forbidden by law, commit an *illegal* act so soon as it is forbidden by law. And in this sense "the law is the strength of sin." But certainly that cannot be used as an argument, for repealing a law when it is founded on principles of morality or justice.

This leads me to call your Lordships' attention to the difference between repealing a law which is of recent enactment, and the abrogation of a law which dates almost from the Church's foundation. My Lords, the question whether we shall repeal, or retain an ancient law, is a question of very serious consideration; and we cannot be accused of prejudice (indeed, I must do the noble Lord the justice to say, that he no sooner uttered the word than he retracted it), if we pause before we relinquish a long established constitution of the Church, and allow marriages within the forbidden degrees.

Now, my Lords, with reference to the foundation of these laws, I must advert to a position of the noble Lord, who said, that he had never met with a person of whatever profession, who defended these laws upon the ground of their being founded upon any basis of moral principle.—[Lord Wharnccliffe: Religious principle.] Religious principle. My Lords, I am

not in the habit of separating the two ; with me, whatever is moral is religious, and whatever is religious is moral. The noble Lord said, he found nobody who defended them on the ground of religious principle. I am afraid the noble Lord has not embraced the opportunities which he has had of conversing with the great body of the clergy of this country, for, whatever may be the sentiments of the 300 or 360 clergymen, who have signed those petitions, I venture to say, that a large majority of the 15,000 who now minister in the temples of God in this country, would hold, that these marriages are virtually prohibited in the Levitical law. My Lords, this perhaps is hardly an occasion for entering on the discussion of that difficult question, as to whether or not these marriages *are* in point of fact prohibited by the Levitical law : and I admit, that as to some of them a doubt may be entertained on that question, but I am convinced, that the great body of the clergy of this country do hold, that as marriages within the degrees of consanguinity are expressly forbidden by the Levitical law, so marriages of the same degree of affinity, are by parity of reasoning, also prohibited. Now, my Lords, this may or may not be a just and legitimate mode of argument ; but this, I must say, that the principle of parity of reasoning on this question has been held good, not only by divines, but by the most eminent lawyers of our own country and others. I am unwilling to trespass on your Lordships' time, but I may state, that it has always been held by the courts of law. An eminent judge, Lord Chief Justice Raymond, has said (a dictum in which I am afraid the noble Lord near me will not concur), that divines know better how to expound the law of marriage than the common lawyers, and though sometimes prohibitions have been granted in causes matrimonial, if it were *res integra*, they would not be granted. Bishop Jewel, who is a great authority on such a subject, speaks of this principle of parity of reasoning, and says,

"Albeit, I am not forbidden by plain words, to marry my wife's sister, yet I am forbidden to do so by other words, which, by exposition, are plain enough. For, when God commands me, I shall not marry my brother's wife, it follows directly by the same, that he forbids me to marry my wife's sister. For, between one man and two sisters, and one woman and two brothers, is like analogy or proportion."

But I understand, my Lords, that

the petitioners desire to carry this principle of parity of reasoning in an opposite direction, and in contravention of an express prohibition ; I understand from the noble Lord, that the restriction is to be removed, not only from the wife's sister, but from the husband's brother. I believe I may say with great confidence, that this is a proposition that will be most revolting to the feelings of clergy and laity, and will be in opposition to the sense of the country at large.

My Lords, I am ready to admit, that the same arguments do not all apply to cases of affinity, which are generally applied to those of consanguinity ; and that the case of a deceased wife's sister does not come under the latter description, as the term consanguinity is commonly understood. But there is one argument which has some weight with the clergy, and I think with those who have considered the religious nature of marriage ; we hold upon the authority of God's word, that man and wife are one flesh, and that to a certain extent it may be said, in a sense, metaphorical indeed, and mysterious, but confirmed by our Lord himself, they do contract a certain kind of consanguinity, which we hold to constitute an objection to such alliances as it is now sought to legalise. This notion of spiritual or mystical consanguinity, is not to be supposed to be a fancy of ecclesiastics and religionists ; it was held in some sense by the Roman jurists and law-givers, as stated by the historian of the Roman empire, which at least, to a certain extent, will shew, that the clergy of the Church of England in maintaining this principle, are not so bigoted, nor so prejudiced, as it has been of late years the fashion to represent. My Lords, with respect to this particular case, the following are the words of Gibbon ; he is speaking of Rome before it became the Rome of Christendom :—

"The profane law-givers of Rome were never tempted by interest or superstition to multiply the forbidden degrees, but inflexibly condemned the marriage of sisters and brothers, hesitated whether first cousins should be touched by the same interdict, revered the parental character of aunts and uncles, and treated affinity as a just imitation of the ties of blood."

Now, my Lords, looking at the relation of marriage as having to a certain extent, the spiritual character attributed to it by the Divine law-giver of our Church, to that doctrine of the

Roman law-givers I must confess that I am very much disposed to accede. At all events I think we should pause well, before we take another step in the path which has been trodden with unreflecting haste within the last few years, which has done much to impair the sacred estimation of the marriage vow, and to undermine the foundation of domestic morality and fidelity in this country.

My Lords, the law passed a few years ago, in my opinion, has very materially injured the morals of this country; and, I have no doubt, your Lordships would find, if you had the means of instituting an investigation, that a great part of the marriages which have taken place within the prohibited degrees, have taken place since the 4th and 5th William the 4th, and have taken place under the sanction of that law in the office of the Registrars in different parts of the country. I do not believe that a clergyman, except through inadvertence, can have solemnized such a marriage. My Lords, whatever may be the effect of the statute law of marriage, the canon law is still unchanged. The noble Lord seems to suppose that the act, commonly called Lord Lyndhurst's Act, made valid these marriages to which it referred. No such thing; it only declared that those marriages, which had been solemnized, should not be impeached by any suit in the Ecclesiastical Court, and, as far as the rights of property are concerned, and the interests of inheritance, so far those marriages became valid; but they are not declared valid for any other purpose. And, my Lords, there are many on this bench who, if any such proposition had been made, I have no doubt, would strenuously have resisted it. My Lords, it is worthy of remark, that this subject has been noticed by the present learned judge of the Arches, who says,—

“Although the statute has prohibited the Ecclesiastical Courts from annulling marriages for affinity contracted before the 31st of August, 1835, yet I am by no means prepared to say that the parties may not be punished by the ecclesiastical law for the incest though the validity of the marriage cannot be called in question, for the enacting part of the act does not make these marriages good and valid to all intents and purposes.”

The truth is, my Lords, that that act did no more than restore the law of marriage in this respect to its ancient state, and give free course to the old canon law of this country. This statement is no as-

sertion of my own, but has been made by another learned ecclesiastical judge, the present judge of the Consistory Court of London, Dr. Lushington, who says,—

“This act restored the old canon law by which these marriages were treated as absolutely void. It was the interference of the common law courts which, in such cases, prohibited the spiritual courts from bastardizing the issue, that created the unnatural distinction of voidable and void.”

My Lords, I mention this, because it is a justification of those who with me supported the noble Mover of that act in his endeavours to carry it into a law, from any charge of inconsistency. We thought it right that the question should be settled; and that any person who had contracted such marriages while it was unsettled, should be saved from penal consequences; but that for the future, those consequences should be known beforehand as certain; and that persons should be deterred, if possible, from contracting those marriages by knowing that they would be *ab initio* void.

My Lords, this induces me to say a word or two on that part of the question, as to the extreme hardship of such prohibitions. I admit, my Lords, that no prohibitions should be admitted, if possible, which are not sanctioned by the laws of God, or the laws of nature. But, my Lords, it is not a valid argument on the part of men who object to such restrictions to say, that they feel them; in their own persons to be a hardship. Why do they feel them to be so? Because they cannot tame and regulate their own passions and inclinations to submit to what the Church and the State consider a salutary law. Persons, no doubt, might be found, my Lords, who would argue, and not without some plausibility, even against those restrictions which are founded on the law of nature. My Lords, what is the law of nature? I am not going to enter into a discussion on the subject, but merely to make this remark; what the noble Lord speaks of as the law of nature, and which I am disposed to admit is the law of nature, in one sense, is not recognised as the law of nature by all people and at all times. My Lords, there is hardly a prohibition with respect to marriage, grounded on the law of nature which has not been departed from in some age and in some country of the world. There is no tie of consanguinity so near, but that it has been lost sight of in the contracting of marriages, by



some one or other of the nations of the heathen world. I mention this, my Lords, to shew that there must be a certain vagueness of definition as to such a point; that it is not easy, independently of revelation, to decide the line, at which the law of nature ceases to operate, and that of expediency begins. My Lords, we may conceive persons, standing in a near degree of relationship, who might say there was cruel hardship in preventing their marriage, if they had formed what they might consider natural attachment; but, my Lords, we must stop somewhere, and our guides ought to be, first, the laws of God, and then social expediency. My Lords, I have dwelt longer than I intended on the question of these prohibitions as founded on the precepts of God's law, and I will not trespass on your Lordships further on that point, because that may be more properly discussed at length, if ever a measure should be introduced into this House for the purpose of abrogating these restrictions.

But, my Lords, allow me to say a word or two with respect to its expediency. It may be expedient, that persons who are now living in a state of discomfort and anxiety, if not in a worse state, from the present condition of the law, which they well know, but disapprove, should be placed in a state of less anxiety and less discomfort, and perhaps in many instances less immorality; but are we to sacrifice what we consider to be the barriers of domestic comfort and good morals, to gratify the scruples or remove the difficulties of comparatively a few persons, who have knowingly involved themselves in difficulty? When the fact is once known, that it is impossible to contract a marriage with a certain person, say a wife's sister, why should there be any more difficulty in a man's shaping his affections, inclinations, wishes and thoughts in such a line, as to shut out from his contemplation all idea of marriage with that person, any more than with his own sister by blood? I see none. What is there to prevent our minds entertaining a criminal attachment towards the nearest relations, but the knowledge that such connexions are forbidden and must never take place? I know, my Lords, this might be carried too far; but in the case of a wife's sister, or one's own sister, I think the same principle of self restraint which operates in the one may be safely and properly required in the other.

Now, my Lords, with regard to the question of expediency. I look at the state of society in this country, and I see reason to think, that the prohibitions which prevent the intermarriage of persons within certain near degrees of affinity, is the very safe guard of our domestic relations. Whatever advantages, my Lords, might result from its removal, in my opinion, they would be more than counterbalanced by the evils that would flow from that measure. There are cases, my Lords, I admit, where a widower is desirous of marrying the sister of his deceased wife, because he thinks that he has thereby a fairer chance of obtaining for his orphan children a kind mother and a faithful protectress, than if he were to introduce under his roof a strange step-mother; but there are many more cases, in the proportion of fifty to one, where the husband would be desirous of having the benefit of the same maternal care over his orphan children, shewn them by the sister of his deceased wife, without any intention of marrying her; where perhaps his affections so linger about the grave of his deceased partner as shut out altogether from his mind, thoughts of future marriage; where he would be grateful to have bestowed on his children the tender care of his deceased wife's sister, an advantage from which they would be utterly precluded, if it was known that it was possible for him to marry that sister. For, my Lords, the state of society in this country is such, that it is held impossible for a man and a woman, not past a certain age, to live together with respectability and propriety, without marriage, if they are persons not prevented by any legal impediment from contracting it. My Lords, I hold that this is a distinction between ourselves and some nations of the Continent very much in our favour; and most sorry should I be, to see the day when that distinction should be removed. My Lords, a deceased wife's sister may now with propriety undertake the care of her orphan nephews and nieces, because she never can stand to their father in any nearer relation. If the prohibitions were removed, it would be impossible for the husband to invite her to come and live under his roof, unless he held out an offer of marriage. The instances where the deceased wife's sister now fills that situation are so many, compared with those where the husband would be desirous of marrying her, that I think a great deal more would be lost on

the one hand by permitting such marriages, than you could by possibility gain on the other.

The noble Lord has alluded to the Continent, and has distinguished between Roman Catholic and Protestant countries. He has said, that in Roman Catholic countries they have restrictions, but they are dispensed with. With regard to Protestant countries, there are in some countries a few restrictions, and in others none at all. My Lord, I have yet to learn, that the domestic habits of the Continent are such, as to hold out by their example any encouragement to us to relax any of the restrictions which makes marriage in this country so sacred and honorable an institution. My Lords, if I am not much misinformed, the facility of contracting these marriages which exists in Germany, has produced effects which would make the sober-minded among the Germans glad to return again to the prohibitions. With regard to America, I admit the great respectability, eminent learning, judgment and sagacity of that distinguished judge, whom the noble Lord has quoted, and who, as he rightly observed, has been cited with distinction by the most eminent lawyers of our own country. I have heard the late Lord Stowell, the great expositor of the law of nations, if not the founder of modern international law, speak of Judge Storey with the greatest respect. But, my Lords, look at the state of America with reference to its population, and the circumstances in which a certain part of that population are placed. It is not very safe to argue from analogy between America and England, the countries are so exceedingly different in respect to population, and to their habits and means of subsistence. With respect to the religious part of the question, I must beg rather to demur to the opinion of Judge Storey, because, if I remember rightly, there is one of his judgments in which he states, that the marriage of sisters to brothers is forbidden by the law of nature, and ought not to be allowed, but that beyond that the prohibition ought not to go.

The bringing forward of this measure, my Lords, leads me to believe, what I have been told is the case, that the removal of this prohibition, of the marriage of a husband with a deceased wife's sister, is only to be the first step which is to lead, by not very slow degrees, to the abolition of all those restrictions, which cannot in the strictest sense be said to be restrictions on account of consanguinity, and I believe even

some of those too. Now, my Lords, I cannot believe, that the people of this country will contemplate with anything like satisfaction, the enactment of a law which I am told is to legalize the marriage of an uncle with his niece. Here again may be urged the same argument which I have touched on before to-night. The uncle is now able to adopt his niece, and take her into his own family and treat her as a daughter, because she never can stand in any more intimate relation. The difference of age in these cases is sometimes not so great, but that attachments might be formed; but if it were possible for any uncle to contract a legal marriage with his niece, no uncle could ever receive his niece into his house as his adopted daughter. My Lords, these are some of the reasons which lead me very much to question the expediency of meddling with the law as it now stands.

Another reason is one which I have already slightly adverted to—namely, the undesirableness of doing anything to shake, further than it has been shaken, the opinion which the people of this country entertain of the sacredness of the marriage contract, and the stability and unchangeableness of those laws by which it is recognised. I must say, at the present moment, my Lords, there is not the same feeling with respect to marriage as there was before the passing of the last Marriage Act, and I am inclined to think, if this House and the other House of Parliament entertain the proposition of my noble Friend, a great deal will be done to undermine morality and weaken the hold which religion and the Church have on the people of this country. With regard to the instances adduced as having occurred at Manchester, it is quite obvious, and it cannot have escaped the attention of the noble Lord, that you might adduce instances of the violation of any of the laws of God and man from all the great manufacturing districts, because there are now in those districts thousands who are suffering from the consequence of long and criminal neglect, on behalf of those who ought to have provided for them, clergymen, and churches, and schools. The law has been violated by persons who never heard of the existence of that law, and never have been initiated into those principles of religion upon which obedience to all laws ought to be founded.

For these reasons, My Lords, I am disposed to say, that the marriage law, as it respects the prohibited degrees, had better

remain as it is ; and that persons should be taught by sound religious instruction to regulate their passions with a view to what they know to be just and right. My Lords, so long as the law is the law, it is our duty to obey it, so far as it is not contrary to the law of God. It may possibly relate to a matter not of moral, or natural, or divine right, but of positive right, still it is our duty to obey the law ; and I cannot see any difficulty if the law is not to be evaded, why men should not discipline their tempers and passions into a ready and willing obedience to that law. My Lords, that is the true cure for any evil that may be occasioned by these prohibitions amongst a certain class of persons, which I believe to be much less than it is represented to be ; and I hope your Lordships will not at once consent to repeal a law which has been the law of the Church almost from its foundation, which is embodied in the laws of this land, and which I believe is as much to be justified on the ground of expediency, as it is consistent with the language of Scripture.

Petitions laid on the Table.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday, May 14, 1841.*

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a first time :—Exeter Small Debts ; Entails (Scotland) ; Felony Explanation.—Read a second time :—Vaccination.

**Petitions presented.** By Mr. Baines, Mr. W. Turner, Sir G. Strickland, Mr. Hume, Mr. Aglionby, Colonel Salwey, Sir M. Wood, Mr. Alnsworth, Mr. E. J. Stanley, Mr. Macaulay, and other hon. Members, from Leeds, Blackburn, Bradford, Derby, West Riding (York), Manchester, Forfar, Edinburgh, and a great many other places, for the Government measure for the Alteration of the Import Duties.—By Mr. Baillie, Lord Worsley, and Sir C. Burrell, from Inverness, Lincolnshire, and Sussex, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.

#### SUGAR DUTIES—EXPLANATION.]

Mr. Gladstone rose and said, that although he was conscious of the presumption with which he might be chargeable in delaying for a few minutes the important business of the evening, in order to draw attention to a matter of a purely personal nature, still his only apology must be, that he himself was the cause of the interruption. The personal discussion to which he referred did not relate to himself, but to his father, one whom he was bound to love most dearly and with whom he felt it the highest honour to be connected. He found that in the debate of the preceding evening, the noble Lord the Member for Northumberland had thought fit, in the discharge of his parliamentary duties, to throw out some imputations which, if di-

rected towards himself (Mr. Gladstone), he should be able to show the House were without any sense or meaning, but whose relevancy or importance were easily understood, if the observations in question were taken as applied to his father. It was difficult to answer for one's feelings on such an occasion, but still he earnestly trusted that in stating the grounds of his complaint he should be able to refrain from any expressions needlessly painful or offensive to the noble Lord. The noble Lord was reported to have said he would not follow the example of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Newark in imputing low and degrading motives. With respect to matters affecting himself, and himself alone, he trusted that he had never shown himself anxious to weary the House with needless explanations ; indeed it was his opinion that the public time was frequently wasted by unnecessary explanations on matters of a trifling personal nature, where the parties concerned might with perfect safety trust to the House and the country for their character and reputation. In this particular instance he was not aware of having imputed low and degrading motives, even to the proposers, much less to the supporters of this measure. He had certainly spoken in strong language, which he would not repeat, because it was not his wish to excite controversy ; but he would content himself with saying, that it certainly was not his wish to impute low and degrading motives, as the noble Lord had stated. The noble Lord said, that it was impossible to forget the part which the hon. Member took in the debates of 1833. He (Mr. Gladstone) would feel himself highly flattered if any hon. Member of that House could remember the part which he had taken in the great measure for the abolition of slavery ; but he would challenge the noble Lord to say, what part he meant to allude to. Did the noble Lord mean to insinuate that he had opposed the great measure of emancipation then carried through the House ? Did he mean to say that he (Mr. Gladstone) had attempted to resist that measure, and when he found resistance hopeless that he had endeavoured to embarrass it ? The noble Lord could say no such thing. To these statements, however, referring as they did solely to himself, he would never have ventured to call the attention of the House, had not the noble Lord thought fit to

allude to others. The noble Lord, addressing the House the other evening, said :—

“ It was impossible also to forget who was before that time the owner of the Vrieden-Hoop estate, in Demerara. It was clearly shown, that the rate of overworking and of mortality on that estate was remarkably high even for Demerara, where, unfortunately, both those evils had prevailed in an eminent degree. In three or four years an enormous quantity of sugar was produced on the estate, and the number of slaves who died was no less than eighty one, being above one-seventh of the whole number.”

Now, he asked the House whether that was not a charge of the very gravest description, and whether it was not one which no man ought to presume to make, unless he were prepared to verify it by proof? The charge, as he understood it, consisted in this, that there was great mortality on the estate, and that that mortality was traceable to the overproduction of sugar. That, the noble Lord said, was clearly shown; but he (Mr. Gladstone) denied that it was ever shown. It was asserted by the noble Lord, but not shown. In 1833 the noble Lord, after making a similar allegation, gave notice of a motion for a return, exhibiting the mortality which took place upon the estate in question, and nothing else. He said, he should object to its production, because there was a great deal of other evidence absolutely necessary to sustain the proposition of the noble Lord, which he proposed entirely to omit. When the motion was brought forward, Lord Spencer recommended the noble Lord to withdraw it. The noble Lord did so, and thereby abandoned his investigation; and yet the noble Lord now said that these points were clearly proved. The noble Lord had therefore stated that to be the case which was not the case, and his attempt to show which he himself abandoned. Undoubtedly there was at that period great mortality upon the estate but it was not confined to that estate, it was a mortality which existed throughout the entire colony of Demerara, and there was nothing more natural. The colony was filled with those slaves during the latter years of the slave-trade, and they all knew that it was not the course of that trade to introduce into colonies entire families, for the purpose of providing a natural succession of the population. It was the course of the slave-trade to intro-

duce adults who were fit for labour, and that being so, what was more natural than that that generation introduced in a mass should have dropped off in about twenty-five years after? The estate in question had only come into his father's possession four or five years before the abolition of slavery, when not less than one-fourth of the slaves were said to be incapacitated for labour; and what was more natural than that they should have dropped off within the next few years? During the short time he was in the Colonial office, a document, prepared by the registrar-general of slaves in Demerara, had been received containing this statement—that looking to the condition and circumstances under which those slaves were imported, it was evident that there must be a rapid decrease in the population for many years to come. The whole course of the noble Lord's accusation rested, not upon the fact of a decrease in the amount of population, but in his having connected that fact with the production of an enormous quantity of sugar. That part of the noble Lord's case he would meet by a simple and unequivocal denial. He totally denied, that there was any production of sugar upon that estate which the noble Lord or any man acquainted with West-Indian cultivation could call enormous. By a reference to other estates it would be found, that their production frequently exceeded, not in small quantities, but to the extent of 30, 40, and 50 per cent., the production of that particular estate. This enormous quantity of sugar, therefore, was a matter originating entirely in the noble Lord's imagination. At this distance of time, he (Mr. Gladstone) could not recollect the facts; but he believed there were about 550 persons on the estate, and that the annual quantity of sugar produced was under 600 hogshheads. He would therefore say—that taking into consideration what the noble Lord had forgotten—the state of the property and the power of the machinery upon it, the production of sugar was below what it might have been, and greatly below that of other estates. If the noble Lord would undertake to prove his assertion upon this point, he (Mr. Gladstone) was ready to meet him; but he could not avoid complaining that the noble Lord had made that assertion upon grounds which he believed the noble Lord would not himself very

much rely upon, and which he thought would occasion some surprise to the House. He complained that the noble Lord should have made an attack upon the nearest relative of a Member of that House, without having had the courtesy of sending him word that he intended doing so. Mark the reply of the noble Lord on the third of June, 1833:

"I can assure the hon. Member that, if I had conceived that the statement which I made on a former occasion would have been considered by him or any other hon. Gentleman as an attack upon the character of those with whom he is connected, I certainly would not have failed to communicate my intention to him beforehand."

With that explanation, he was contented at the time; but he certainly did not expect that, after a lapse of eight years, the noble Lord would have again attacked the character of his father, during his absence from the House, and without having given him notice. He did not mean to accuse the noble Lord of having broken his pledge, because he was convinced that the noble Lord had forgotten that pledge as completely as he had forgotten the feelings of those against whom his attack had been directed; but this he would say, that a more absurdly irrelevant attack had never been made in that House. The noble Lord had said, that the hon. Member for Newark had no right to speak, because his father was the proprietor of a certain estate upon which, according to the allegation of the noble Lord, which he totally and broadly denied, the mortality was attributable to the overproduction of sugar. Now, even supposing it to be true that those abuses did take place was it possible that he could be held responsible for them, or was his liberty of speech in the debates of that House to be abridged, because those over whose actions he had no more control than the noble Lord himself should have been guilty of such things? He contended, likewise, that the attack of the noble Lord was unjust, not that the conduct of any man ought to be safe from investigation by that House, which he regarded as the grand inquest of the nation and the proper tribunal before which complaints should be made, but because he conceived that those who made such complaints should be ready to sift them to the bottom, and not make use of them as weapons of debate for inflicting attacks with which the worst man might amuse himself, and

against which it was impossible that the best man could be secure. He did not claim exemption from animadversion in that House, or wish to set himself up as a model of the manner in which their debates should be conducted. Fault had been found with the remarks he had made upon the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Edinburgh, and having reference to one who had preceded him in his public career. But if he made an attack, he made it, not by assailing those in whom he was deeply interested, but by pronouncing upon one, for whose memory he must have felt the greatest respect, an eulogium which, if feeble, was at least sincere, and by calling upon him to vindicate the course he had pursued, which he did in a manner fully worthy of him. But, if he were to be punished for his parliamentary delinquencies, and others for their excesses in debate, by attacks having no reference to them or their own conduct, but only aiming through them at absent or innocent parties, he would tell the noble Lord, that that was a description of warfare of which he (Mr. Gladstone) should rather be the object than the agent. The hon. Member then referred to the statement made on Tuesday evening by the Under-Secretary for the colonies in reference to the management of Hill Coolies on his (Mr. Gladstone's) father's estate. He could only say, that he had never heard there was any mortality amongst them beyond what was natural after the period of their landing; and he had never heard of any serious complaints, except in one instance, when the complaint was brought by one Hill Cooly against another. These Hill Coolies were to a man satisfied with the treatment they had received, and had themselves declared in the presence of a stipendiary magistrate, that instead of claiming an immediate passage back to India, or taking their chance for labour in the colony, they preferred continuing in the employment they were then in.

Viscount *Howick* was convinced, that the House would think it imperative on him to answer the statements of the hon. Member; and in doing so, in the first place, he would state to the House what it was he did say. On a former evening, on which he had made the statement, he thought—and he appealed to the Gentlemen who were in the House at the time—he thought the hon. Member for Newark, in the course of his speech, did bring this heavy charge, not only against the Govern-

ment, but against those who supported them, that for some mere party purpose, or at best with a view to overcome some financial difficulty, they were prepared wilfully and deliberately to incur all the evil and all the horror of increasing the slave-trade. When he said he imputed low and degrading motives, what he meant was this, that he thought the hon. Member for Newark did impute to the Government and to those who supported them an indifference to the vast amount of human suffering which the encouragement of the slave-trade involved. The hon. Gentleman might view this question in a different way from him, but he could assure the House, that there was no imputation of motives which he felt more deeply and sensibly than that. He thought, that to suppose a Member capable, for party purposes, or with the mere view of any financial advantage, of overlooking the sufferings inflicted by the slave-trade, was supposing him to have a black heart indeed. He had complained, that the hon. Gentleman had imputed motives to those at his side of the House, when the conduct of his own party and of those connected with himself rendered them liable to the imputation of questionable motives. He did not impute to Mr. Gladstone, then the owner of the Vrieden-Hoop estate, that he wilfully and deliberately sacrificed human life for the purpose of acquiring increased wealth for himself; but what he did endeavour to show was, that there were circumstances connected with that property which made it important, that the hon. Gentleman should view with some indulgence the motives of others. He asserted in 1833, and he repeated now, that he was convinced, that Mr. Gladstone was not cognizant of the evils that took place on his estate; but that the tendency of the system was to produce such as those to which he referred; and he proceeded to argue the propriety of the hon. Gentleman and others, when a man's conduct was open to two explanations, taking the more favourable one instead of the harsher and more uncharitable. He thought this a perfectly legitimate course of argument to take. The hon. Gentleman had said, that he made a statement which was not correct. On that point he begged leave decidedly to differ from the hon. Gentleman. What he asserted was, that in Demerara, during the existence of slavery, an examination of the statistical returns showed, that where there was a large production of sugar, there was also a large rate of mortality amongst the negroes employed. On

a most careful examination of the papers, he found that conclusion not to be shaken. The hon. Gentleman debated this subject with him in 1833, and the hon. Gentleman did not attempt to disprove any of the facts on which his argument was founded. The hon. Gentleman drew different conclusions from them, and accounted for them otherwise than he; but this main fact was left untouched, that in Demerara a large production of sugar, and high rate of mortality were found exactly to correspond. He repeated that statement. In 1833 he showed by documents, that the mortality was greater on the sugar than on the cotton estates. This was attempted to be accounted for by the nature of the population; but he showed, that on the Vrieden-Hoop, estate, females preponderated; and that, so far from there being any deficiency of births, the births on the cotton and sugar estates did not materially differ. The difference in mortality was not accounted for by saying the old and infirm preponderated in one estate over the other; for it was on the young and healthy the burden of sugar cultivation fell. That was the statement which he had made in 1833, but if the hon. Gentleman wished, he would repeat his motion. The hon. Gentleman spoke from recollection. He had referred to the authentic records of what took place, and they completely confirmed his own memory. As to the return for which he had moved, showing the deaths which had taken place on this estate, the hon. Gentleman distinctly objected to it on the ground that it should contain information as to the disease of each slave, the state of their health, and such other particular information, which it was utterly impossible could be obtained in this country, and which he doubted whether it could be obtained in the colony. He did not withdraw that motion voluntarily. He thought the return, in the shape it was voted for, was calculated to elicit all the information necessary for forming a judgment, and he only abstained from pressing it, because Earl Spencer stated, that there was no possibility of obtaining the information which the hon. Gentleman required. But as the hon. Gentleman now said, that he withdrew his motion, because he despaired of sustaining its allegations. [Mr. Gladstone: "No, no."] He appealed to the recollection of the House, whether the hon. Gentleman had not, ten minutes ago said, that he offered to withdraw the motion, and by so doing, "in fact gave up the case." He totally denied that he gave it up, or that he gave

it up for any other reason than because he was not allowed to press it. Indeed, the only object of the motion was, to make the House officially cognizant of documents which he had in his own possession. This was the explanation which he had to give. He could assure the hon. Member that he used no offensive observations to him or to his relation; but he did want to show, and he thought it necessary, fair, and right, to show, that those on the hon. Gentleman's side required as indulgent consideration of their conduct as any one on his. When the hon. Gentleman complained that he did not give notice that he was about to make such statements as he had done, he could only say, that it was scarcely possible for him to give such a notice. A great number of hon. Members were anxious to speak in the debate, and it was utterly impossible to know when he should have an opportunity of addressing the House. Besides he was not aware, that it was the usual practice, when a Gentleman intended to answer the argument of a preceding speaker, and perhaps to retort on an attack which had been made, to give notice of his intending to take such a course. He could sincerely assure the hon. Gentleman that he was sorry he had given him pain, but he still thought it not unimportant, as an attempt had been made to excite throughout the country a cry of inhumanity against those with whom he was connected, to show that others would suffer not less than them from the practice of imputing the worst motives for the conduct of men.

Mr. Gladstone understood the noble Lord to speak now in a sense very materially different from what he was reported to have spoken the other night. If he meant to argue, that the cultivation of sugar under slavery was less favourable to human life than the rearing of cotton, he would entirely concur with him; but that was not certainly the conclusion which one would have drawn from reading the speech made two nights ago by the noble Lord. His statement then was, that upon the particular estate in question an enormous quantity of sugar was produced beyond the average of the other estates in the island, and that, in consequence, the mortality had been greatly increased. That was the statement of which he complained, and which he most unequivocally denied.

Viscount Howick was very glad the hon.

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Gentleman had reminded him of a point he had intended to state. He now begged leave to repeat what he before stated, that the produce on that estate was considerably above the average in the colony. He had referred to a document for the purpose of showing, that every negro employed on that estate had produced 2,000lbs. of sugar, while the negroes on other estates in the colony, where there had been no decrease of population, had not produced more than one half of that amount.

Mr. Gladstone: Taking into consideration the difference in the power of the machinery employed, I beg leave most unequivocally, distinctly, and broadly, to deny that part of the noble Lord's statement.

Mr. Vernon Smith begged, in explanation to state, that the assertion he had made the other evening was, that the mismanagement of the Hill Coolies on the estate of the hon. Gentleman's relative in British Guiana, had been the main ground on which the proposition of his noble Friend (Lord J. Russell) had been resisted, for the introduction of the Hill Coolies into the Mauritius. He hoped he should also be allowed to state that the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, had misrepresented another part of his argument, with respect to the effect of this measure on the slave question. All he meant to urge was, that he could see nothing in the proposition of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool which pledged them to the abolition of the foreign slave-trade, and therefore he saw no inconsistency in opposing it.

SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS  
—ADJOURNED DEBATE (SIXTH DAY).]  
The Order of the Day having been read for resuming the adjourned debate,

Mr. P. Howard said, with much satisfaction that he had given way to the hon. Member for Newark (Mr. Gladstone), to afford him an opportunity of entering into explanation of matters that involved his personal feelings, although his address to the House was more of a reply to the speech of the noble Lord, the Member for Northumberland, than an explanation. After the ample discussion which this subject had already undergone, he should detain the House but a very short time, but he felt that it was necessary he should seek to justify the vote he was about to give. In the course of the debate very

few indeed had closely adhered to the subject of the motion of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, none so much so as the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the University of Cambridge. With respect to the reduction of the duty on sugar, he held in his hand a copy of the memorial of the West-India proprietors presented to the House by that right hon. Gentleman, and the first signature to which was that of Mr. Burge, a gentleman who thoroughly understood all the bearings and interests of those colonies, and the questions that concerned them. Now, in that memorial he found it broadly stated, that there could not be a sufficient supply of sugar from those colonies for home consumption. And did not the admission justify the Government in seeking elsewhere for an increased supply? The only question then was, under what conditions ought we to admit foreign sugar, for admitted it must be? He was free to confess that, if our own colonies were capable of supplying enough, the Government ought, upon the principle that "Charity begins at home," to deliberate well before they admitted foreign competition. But it was a widely different case when there was a deficiency of supply for the people of this country. One reason had been assigned in the memorial against the admission of foreign competition, namely, the increased expense which free labour had entailed upon the West-India colonies in the establishment of a police and schools of education; but it should be recollected, that this country had paid in the past year upwards of 70,000*l.* out of the consolidated fund, for the payment of magistrates in those colonies. They might still go on expecting and receiving pecuniary assistance from this country for some years to come, but that was no reason why they should stand in the way of the general improvement of the country. As to the charge of giving encouragement to the slave-trade, he did not think, that we had any right to interfere with the Brazils in the use of slave labour, although undoubtedly we had a right to interrupt the importation of slaves into that country from Africa. It would be much better policy to cope with the Brazils by amicable arrangement under treaties, than to attempt the abridgement of slave labour there by any other means. Our exportations to the Brazils at present were two-thirds as much as we exported to the West Indies,

and we had now an opportunity open to us of realizing what Mr. Canning said, of calling a new world into existence. With regard to the timber duties, he thought, that that was perhaps the weakest point of the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, because he had not carried out his principles on that subject with the same boldness he had manifested with regard to sugar and corn. He disapproved of the augmentation of the duty on Canadian timber, and he thought it would have been better to have further reduced the duty on Baltic timber, and to have left Canadian timber liable to the same duty as at present. With respect to the duty on corn, the Ministers, by the proposal of a fixed duty, placed themselves in the position they ought to occupy—that of umpires between the two contending parties in the State. They had adopted a course which, while it would give satisfaction to the country, would obviate many of the evils of the present system. The Ministerial measure would tend to make the trade in corn a fixed and regular trade, and would conduce to the prosperity of the manufactures of the country. It was the opinion of Mr. Blamire, a high authority on the subject, that a fixed duty as a protection to agriculture, was preferable to the sliding scale. Many agriculturists would have preferred a duty of 10*s.* to one of 8*s.*, but he thought, that in order to obtain a final settlement of the question, that agriculturists would be acting wisely to accept the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The present system had been tried for twelve years, and during seven of those years, there had been a considerable importation of foreign corn, therefore they had failed in their object of insuring a permanent supply from the home grower. He was glad to see, that the Government did not mean to deny to the manufacturers of corn that protection to which he thought they were entitled. He should be sorry to expose the British husbandman unprotected to competition with the corn grower of Poland and the Crimea. He considered the absolute repeal of the Corn-laws a measure which would lead to vast mischief and hardship, and he was glad to see the Government, instead of giving into the opinions of theorists, pursuing a middle course, and, he was sure, the scheme they had submitted to the House, would be approved of by the country, and



that on an appeal to the country, a verdict would be given in their favour. He gave them full credit for that dignified disregard of the emoluments of office, which had impelled them to declare, that whether in or out of office, they would maintain the principles they had propounded, and he was convinced the country would wish to see these measures carried out by the Ministers who had propounded them, and not by those, who, now seated on the Opposition benches, might hereafter find it convenient to adopt them. He was sure the country wished to see these measures carried out by its friends, and not by those who were in opposition to it. The country was anxious to see reforms carried out by Reformers. But that the Ministers should resign office without appealing to the country, he could not for a moment contemplate. That the House and the country should see this measure carried out by single hearted Reformers was not only his wish, but that of every right-minded man in the country.

Alderman *Copeland* said, he dissented entirely from the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He wished to say a word respecting a statement made by his hon. Friend, the Member for Paisley (Mr. *Hastie*), who had stated, that the majority of the East India merchants were in favour of the Ministerial plan. He had now before him a document, signed by some of the first houses connected with the East India trade, who totally dissented from the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, respecting the sugar duties, and differed from his hon. Friend. It was as follows :—

"We, the undersigned, members of the East-India and China Association, having seen a statement in the public papers, purporting that Mr. *Hastie*, as deputy chairman of the East-India and China Association, stated last night, 'that there was not a member of that body who did not fully concur in the principle announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer,' do declare, that they entirely dissent from the statement as above, as the proposed alteration would be ruinous to the existing East-India and colonial interests, and they further consider, that any alteration in the duties of sugar should be prospective.

"J. COCKBURN & Co.

"WALKINSHAW & Co.

"GARDNER, URQUHART & Co.

"FINLAY, HODGSON & Co. (as far as

the statement of Mr. *Hastie* is concerned.)

"RAWSON, NORTON & Co.

"FLETCHER, ALEXANDER & Co.

"H. GANGER."

Immediately on the announcement of the Budget, a meeting of the East-India and China Association of London took place, and a resolution was come to, that the duty proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was totally inadequate for the protection of our trade with India and the colonies. His hon. Friend, if he was not mistaken, was a member of a deputation which had an interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject. He would not shrink from saying, that the project of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if carried, would have for its effect the total ruin of the commerce of the country. Such was his opinion, for he never could believe, that after the sacrifices made by this country for the extinction of slavery, after the changes which had taken place with relation to the cultivation of sugar in the colonies, particularly in India, after the vast capital embarked in that pursuit on the faith of the maintenance of something like protective duties, the colonists would consider themselves justly treated; nor could he believe that when the news of the proposed alteration in the timber duties reached Canada, that colony, agitated as it had been, would be maintained in tranquillity. With reference to the Corn-laws, he had often expressed his opinion upon that question. He had never shrunk from giving his vote against alteration, for he believed in his conscience, that a low price of bread, even if the utmost wishes of those who clamoured for a total repeal were gratified, would not ameliorate in any way the condition of the operatives of this country.

Mr. *Hastie* said, he had stated most distinctly in that House, and he now repeated, that the all but unanimous opinion of the people connected with India approved of a moderate differential duty, not prohibitory in its effect. He thought he had a right to make this statement, as, from having the honour of being chairman of the body referred to by his hon. Friend, he was brought much in contact with its members.

Sir *Hussey Vivian* :—Sir, I am always very unwilling to trespass on the indulgence of the House, but most especially

so at this period of a debate which has already lasted the extraordinary length of six days, and consequently on which I can hardly hope to throw any new light; still, having always been a strenuous friend to the freedom of trade generally, having for some time seen the absolute necessity of an alteration in the Corn-laws, I owe it to myself—I owe it to the friends by whom I am surrounded, to express my pleasure at, and my entire concurrence in, the measures proposed by her Majesty's Government. The manner in which the question has been met by the hon. Gentleman on the opposite side of the House, reminds me of a circumstance which occurred some fifteen or sixteen years since. When Mr. Huskisson, proposing some alterations in the import duties, amongst others, proposed a reduction of the duty on the importation of copper ore, I then rose and objected to the alteration, the effect of which, I apprehended might be injurious to the interests of the county of Cornwall; at the same time I expressed a strong opinion in favour of the freedom of trade. Mr. Huskisson, in reply, said that "his gallant Friend, like many other of his friends, was favourable to free-trade excepting when it happened that the measure proposed touched their own pockets." Now, although I am always reluctant to attribute motives, I still must say, it does seem to me, it is by some such feeling as that described by Mr. Huskisson that those who now oppose the measure of the Government are influenced. If sugar—if timber—aye, even if corn, which is at the bottom of the whole opposition, had either of them to be singly dealt with, we should not, I am persuaded, have had the great interests and influence of the others opposed to us. But the Government having very boldly and very properly proposed dealing with all three, the parties interested have combined in their opposition; of this there could not be stronger evidence than was to be found in an advertisement which appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of yesterday, and which I now hold in my hand. By this it is to be seen that at a meeting of the United Ship Owners' company, persons representing the West-India colonies and landed property, had been present, and all had come to a resolution to oppose the Government; and that it was in consideration of their own immediate interests is evident from no notice whatever having in this adver-

tisement been taken of that, which by many Members has been put forth as their great objection to the measure now before the House; that is, the encouragement to slavery that would be given by the introduction of Brazilian sugar; in regard for their pockets, all consideration for the poor negroes appears to have been forgotten by the parties at this meeting. In his speech last night, the hon. Member for Kilkenny had very properly observed, that the subject of debate, the alteration of the sugar-duties, although the question immediately before the House, was, in fact, only a part of the great question of a general reform of the laws by which our commercial relations with other countries are governed; it is, therefore, impossible, in discussing it, not to notice those most important of all laws that bear upon our commercial and manufacturing interests, the Corn-laws. Before, therefore, I proceed to notice the proposed alteration in the sugar-duties, I will take leave to say a few words on the regulations relating to the importation of corn and their effects; and I am especially induced to do this from the opportunity my official situation, as I shall presently explain to the House, has afforded me of becoming acquainted with them. I will, however, first ask, and I appeal to my hon. Friend the Member for Shoreham (Sir C. Burrell), who, I observe is doing me the honour to pay particular attention to what I am now saying, whether those laws have answered the purpose for which they were intended? Have they realised all the hopes that had been held out during the discussion that had preceded their being passed? have prices been moderate and steady? has there been no agricultural distress? no Committee sitting to inquire into it? had the produce of the country been equal to the home consumption, and have we not been obliged to seek a supply from a foreign market to satisfy the wants of the people? If then, I ask, none of these, the promised advantages, had been derived from the Corn-laws, and I confidently assert they have not, what benefits, let me ask, can be enumerated? I will tell the House what have been the disadvantages. The Corn-laws have at times deranged the whole monetary system of the country—they had very nearly on one occasion produced a national bankruptcy. They have driven you to the degrading necessity of doing that which has contributed more

than any thing which ever occurred, to damage the credit of a nation, before then standing higher than that of any nation in the world, they obliged you to borrow from the bank of France, to support the credit of the Bank of England. Besides all this they have occasioned that which is still worse—they have made it appear as if there were two parties and two separate interests within the country, that the interests of the agriculturists were at variance with those of the manufacturers. For one I have always felt, and always said, that that these interests are so linked, so interwoven, so dove-tailed together, that the one could not flourish, and the other fade. In 1831 I expressed this opinion in this House, and have never seen reason to depart from it. Now, however, unhappily a feeling, contrary to this, has arisen. On the one hand, it is declared that agriculture can not flourish without the Corn-laws; whilst on the other, it is with equal confidence asserted, that the manufacturers must be ruined unless these laws are repealed. Such a state of things must be destructive of the best interests of the country, and the Ministers were bound, in the discharge of their duty, to endeavour to find a remedy, whether the remedy proposed, that is, a fixed duty of 8s. on wheat, is that which will be found best; I will not pretend to say—but I will say, that any change from a system, advantageous only to speculators and jobbers, and producing such mischievous effects as I have described, must be of infinite advantage to the country at present, in consequence of the Corn-laws, not only labouring under great difficulties, but, I fear I may add, in a position of considerable danger. It is a favorite doctrine with the advocates of the Corn-laws, that the home market is the best market. Supposing it to be so, admitting it to be so, it must still be remembered that the home market is not the only market, that the agriculturists are not the only customers, that nearly, if not fully, one-half of our manufacturing population, is engaged in working for foreign markets—and if, in consequence of the working of the Corn-laws this portion of your people are not allowed to obtain in return for the produce of their industry, for the sweat of their brow, that which will enable them to support their families, it is impossible but that distress, destitution, and starvation must follow. Does this benefit the farmer? must it not, on the other hand, eventually

tend to his injury? is it not clear that the distressed families of the manufacturers must at last fall back on the poor-rates? My own conviction is, that so far from the admission of foreign corn doing an injury to the agricultural interests, it will certainly be highly advantageous to them—the effect will be not that of lowering the price in this country, but raising the price elsewhere: the demand from hence will increase the price in the foreign markets, and manufacturers of those countries who are now enabled to undersell us will no longer have it in their power to do so, whilst our own, from the encouragement thus given them, will have the means of consuming a greater quantity of corn, and consequently become better customers in the corn market. I do not say this without having good grounds for the opinion—not without having made some inquiry into the subject. It so happened that two years since, thinking it probable that a large supply of arms might suddenly be required, having learnt that in 1792 a considerable quantity had been obtained from Belgium, I felt it my duty, as the head of the Ordnance department, to visit that country, and ascertain in what quantity and at what price arms could be obtained, if the necessity for going to other than our own manufacturers should arise. I was thus afforded an opportunity of seeing what were the effects of the Corn-laws, not only on the particular branch of one manufacture to which I have adverted, but on the manufacturing interests of our country generally, I had an opportunity of conversing with men well qualified to form an opinion. I heard but one opinion, and that was universal condemnation of our existing Corn-laws, an opinion in which I was confirmed by the results of my enquiries into the state of the manufactures in Belgium and in Prussia. In regard to arms, I found the manufacturers fully employed in executing large orders which had been offered to our own manufacturers at Birmingham, but which had been taken by those of Liege at a lower price, than ours could afford to take them at, thus depriving our manufacturers of work which would have produced to them large sums, and the agriculturists of customers with money in their pockets; whilst, as relating to the immediate object of my visit, arms, for furnishing which above 3*l.* was demanded by the manufacturers of Birmingham, were offered by those of Liege at 2*l.*

On my return to England, it having transpired that I had visited Liege with a view to ascertain the price at which I could procure arms, the gun makers in this country feared I might resort to such a measure—(a measure, I beg to say, to which I never would have resorted, but under circumstances of the most pressing necessity—for whilst our own laws prevented our own manufacturers competing with those of other countries I would not willingly do them so great an injustice as to go elsewhere). In consequence, however, of this visit, and under such apprehension, I received from Birmingham a letter, signed by nearly all those concerned in the manufacture of arms, in which it was stated that, “if such a measure as obtaining arms from Liege was resorted to, it would inevitably lead to the ruin of thousands,” and adding, “that it was utterly impossible for them (the gunmakers of Birmingham), to compete with foreigners so long as the present Corn-laws exist, or so long as bread, which is the standard of wages, is by artificial means, forced to maintain a high price.” From my own observation, and from my own enquiry, I was confirmed in this opinion; in short, every thing I saw, and everything I heard, convinced me of the truth of what I lately heard a very intelligent friend say, when speaking of the distress in the manufacturing districts, “Whilst our Corn-laws exist, commerce is in chains!” I will now show the House the opinion entertained in another, and as respects our commercial interests, most important country, the United States of America, I hold in my hand a letter, dated Philadelphia, 7th of February, 1841: it is from a gentleman well known to many hon. Members of the House, a gentleman who once had a seat in this House, and who is now her Majesty’s Consul at Philadelphia—when I mention his name, many hon. Members who are around me, will, I am confident, agree in feeling, that any opinion falling from such a man, is well worthy of attention—it is Mr. Peter, who was Member for Bodmin. He writes as follows:—

“I find the Corn-laws operating to our prejudice here, just as they do in every part of the European continent. (Lord Byron says) ‘that when a man would do a deed of worth he looks at Greece, then turns to tread, so sanctioned, on the tyrants head. Here as well as in Europe, when a nation would do anything illiberal, it points to the English

Corn-laws, and thus throws fresh obstacles in the way of commerce.”

Such, then is the opinion of one well qualified to give an opinion, such the estimation in which the Corn-laws are held, such the effect produced in America. In conclusion, on this subject, I will lastly advert to an opinion also of some consequence, lately expressed in one of the French Chambers—I refer to the opinion of Count Lanjunais, who said in effect, (for I have not the paper with me to quote from.) that the repeal of the Corn-laws would contribute most materially to the aggrandisement of England, and who cautioned the French to prepare for it. Having now, I fear, already detained the House too long on this subject, I will be as brief as possible in offering a few remarks on that more immediately before the House—the alteration of the sugar duties—I confess I cannot but lament the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, opposed the measure on the grounds set forth in the amendment. I cannot but regret the line of argument that has been resorted to by those who, in conjunction with that noble Lord, have come forward to resist the measure of the Government; nor can I say that the means to which our opponents have resorted, are altogether such as I should have expected from them or such as do them credit. They have endeavoured throughout the country to raise a cry against the Government as proposing a measure, the tendency of which, was to encourage slavery, by such means they had tried, and this to serve a party purpose, to enlist the best feelings of humanity, against the best interests of our manufacturers. I will yield to no man in this House, or in existence, in a detestation and horror of slavery. I well remember that almost the first guinea I ever had to dispose of when a boy at Harrow school, was given in support of an anti-slavery association; from that hour to the present, I have never ceased to entertain the same feelings, and to the end of my days, I shall continue so to do. But it is absurd to say, that the admission of sugar from Brazil is to encourage slavery, and on such grounds to resist it, unless you carry out the principle, and put a stop to all commerce with countries in which there are slaves. It is making a distinction without a difference; it is in fact, splitting hairs, to say that you will not import sugar from Brazil, whilst you import

cotton from the Floridas, tobacco from Virginia, and copper ore from Cuba; and no one who gave himself the trouble for one moment to consider the subject could think otherwise. My own opinion is, that so far from an increased intercourse with the Brazils being disadvantageous to the slaves, it will in effect be highly advantageous. We may obtain a power and an influence over the people of that country by the greater intercourse, we should thus have with them; whilst by closing the door to such intercourse, telling them they were slaveholders and miscreants, with whom we would have no dealings, we should only drive them to trade with other nations, to the great injury of our own manufactures, and certainly not to the advantage of the blacks. Besides which, are we to be told that free-labour cannot contend with slave-labour? Are we to be told that the proprietor of an estate in the West-Indies, who has been relieved from the charge of the aged and the infirm, the women and the children, and who now has only to pay the able-bodied for work actually done, and who moreover has been benefitted by the enormous sum of twenty millions, paid by the nation for the abolition of slavery,—are we now to be told that such proprietor has to fear a contest with the slave-owner? And are the people of this country still to go on paying annually a much higher price for their sugar than is necessary in order to support the possessors of West-India property? I cannot for a moment believe it is necessary, nor could I believe that the people of England will submit to it. It had always been held out, that out of the abolition of slavery, would arise the advantage of cheaper labour, and the proprietors be thus rewarded for any sacrifice they may have made, and I yet hope and trust it will be so. The certain consequence of the introduction of Brazilian sugar into our markets, must be to stimulate to exertion in our own colonies. Competition encourages activity, intelligence, and improvement. Monopoly leads to indolence and apathy—it is against opinion that the most flourishing branches of our commerce, have arisen to their present state of prosperity, and so far from the introduction of foreign sugar being injurious to the interests of our West-India planters, my firm conviction is, that it would tend, for the reasons I have now stated, much to their advantage, and to the advantages also of the labouring

population employed in our own islands. I am sorry not to see the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, in his place, as he had in the course of his long, and (as every thing falling from him was) able speech, advanced some arguments in which I can not concur. The noble Lord (Lord Stanley) appeared to think that Brazilian sugar could not be introduced into this country, but in substitution for, or displacement of (for displacement was the word the noble Lord used) a quantity in proportion of our own colonial sugar. Such an argument went to the limitation of consumption. I am surprised to find any one possessing so acute and comprehensive a mind as the noble Lord, had fallen into such error. I would tell the noble Lord, were he present, that there is no limit to consumption, and I would refer in proof of this to the fact—that in years when sugar had been cheap, the consumption per head throughout England, as was shewn by the hon. Member for Kilkenny, nearly doubled that of years when the price of sugar had been high. The noble Lord must have observed, that at all times, and under all circumstances, whenever greater facilities have been given to trade and to consumption, the increase had been in proportion. Let the noble look to the great increase in the consumption of coffee since the duty had been lowered—to the increase of travellers since the introduction of railroads—to the increase of letters by post since the reduction of postage, if he wanted evidence of the truth of this principle, which in fact is general, and which I defy any one to controvert. Does not every hon. Member who now hears me know, and will they not admit that the consumption of bread, of coffee, and of sugar, in their establishments, is greater in proportion to the number of mouths, than in the cottage of the agricultural labourer, or the dwelling of the artisan? Give but the labouring class the means of procuring as much as their wants require, and their consumption will be as great as that of the more wealthy, and these means can only be afforded by the extension of trade, and by enabling them freely to exchange the produce of their labours, in order to obtain a supply of the articles, the necessaries and comforts of life for their families. One word more in respect to the introduction of Brazilian sugar displacing a quantity of West-India—a simple and very probable

case will shew the fallacy of it. A manufacturer of cotton or hardware has, I will suppose, produced articles sufficient to procure for himself and his family all the necessaries of life—a portion of those articles he has sold, and with the proceeds purchased flour, clothes, and supplied others of his wants—but he still has some of his goods left, and the home-market is glutted; an opportunity is afforded him of exchanging the remaining articles for Brazilian sugar, and he is allowed by the law to do so—will any one say, that by such an arrangement a quantity of West-India sugar is displaced? Is it not clear that the manufacturer is thus enabled to procure that, of which his family must otherwise have been deprived? whilst the Brazilian sugar so introduced is an addition to any other sugar that might have been previously in the market; to which market the manufacturer was prevented going owing to the want of sale for his goods. The noble Lord also adverted to the amount of duty to be taken off, and like many others on that side of the House, had asked what benefit the reduction of 1s. 6d. per hundred was to the poorer classes? No doubt the noble Lord was right in saying the amount was but small, as far as respects the actual reduction; but had the noble Lord forgotten that sugar was last year 80s. the hundred, whereas it is now somewhere about 60s. and was the noble Lord really so little conversant with the working of our import duties, and the effects of a greater or smaller quantity of any article being brought into the market as not to see that the benefit to be derived to the poor man was not so much from the actual diminution of the price in consequence of the amount of duty taken off, as from the prevention of that great increase of price, which was the certain consequence of a short supply, and which last year had prevented the poor man from obtaining in his family that which was now something more than a comfort—which was, in fact, almost a necessary of life. The noble Lord had produced a *Liverpool Price Current*, from which he had read a letter signed by a Whig and a Tory, in which it was stated that when the first ministerial plan was announced, a great panic had been occasioned, but that when it was seen that it would be defeated, calm had been restored. The noble Lord had, in effect, triumphantly exclaimed, “this is

the light in which the measures of the Government are viewed by the country, this is the manner in which they are estimated.” The noble Lord deceived himself—the calm was not a calm arising out of reason and common sense (although he called the motion of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, a motion founded in common sense), it is the triumph of monopoly, the victory of the monopolists, it is a victory of which some of those who may now have contributed to gain it, will live to repent. The noble Lord had also in his triumph referred to the late loss of several seats to the liberal party—he spoke of “Borough after borough being seized by his party, and of a Government tottering to its fall.” [*Cheers.*] Does the noble Lord, or in his absence, I will ask, do any of the hon. Members who now cheer, do they approve of the means by which these seats have been obtained? are they prepared to march with their new allies, the Chartists, who, at Nottingham, at least, it is admitted joined their ranks and contributed to the victory? It is possible that the seats now occupied by the friends around me to-night, will, before long, be occupied by the right hon. Baronet and those from the opposite sides. [*Cheers.*] I understand these cheers, but I would not have hon. Members be too confident. I would recommend them not to cheer too soon, they may yet be disappointed in their expectations. It is possible that the defection in the liberal camp—a defection which, in one instance, at least, arose out of a feeling, a mistaken one, that could not but be respected, however it was to be lamented; it is, I say, possible that from such causes that change, to which hon. Members opposite so anxiously look, may take place; but whenever this does happen, I will venture to tell them, the measures proposed by her Majesty’s Ministers, or others of a similar description, and such as will produce the same effects, must be propounded. The right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) who, when the necessity arose had never been backward in adopting that which was expedient, even although at other times the measure may have been opposed by him (and he not one to blame the right hon. Baronet for so acting) will be found coming down to the House and proposing, and those around him supporting, measures similar to those to which they now objected. It could not possibly be otherwise. A re-

vision of the tariff and a reduction of the import duties can not much longer be postponed. This great question which involves the prosperity, and I may add, tranquility of the country cannot be staved off—truth must prevail—liberal principles must predominate—their advocates must conquer—party spirit may for a time stand in the way, but party spirit is but as a feather in the scale when weighed against the best interests of the people of the greatest commercial nation in the world. England abounding in her mineral productions, surpassing in the intelligence of her population, foremost in the skill of her citizens and in the application of machinery—distinguished for the wealth and enterprise of her merchants, is the last country on the face of the globe that should object to the most perfect freedom of trade, and should be the first to teach others, that in the extension of it, is to be found the true source of commercial greatness, national prosperity, and political power; the best security for peace at home and peace abroad.

Sir *Charles Douglas* said, that on that, the sixth night of this protracted debate, he should not venture to address the House, well knowing how many there were, on both sides, whose practical knowledge and experience would ensure that attention which he could only hope to gain from its kind indulgence; indeed, he felt it would be very presumptuous on his part to rise at all, if he intended to enter at large into the general question, after the powerful, argumentative, and convincing speech of his noble Friend, the Member for North Lancashire, two nights before; a speech which he had a right to designate as perfectly unanswerable. For, not only had the Government allowed that speech to close that evening's debate, but had allowed two nights to pass without making any attempt to reply to it, excepting to one point to which the right hon. and gallant Officer, had alluded, and which on reflection he (Sir C. Douglas) was sure the gallant Gentleman, would think he had better have let alone. It was true that he had on a former occasion referred to the committee on Import duties, which sat last year of which he was a Member. When some observations which had been made by a noble Lord (Ashburton), in another place were brought under discussion. With respect to the expressions used by that noble Lord, it was not for him (Sir

C. Douglas), to say, any thing, for it would ill become him to defend one whose high character, liberal feelings and practical knowledge of commercial affairs rendered him an authority on such subjects; but he must say, that with regard to the opinion which that noble Lord had given, he (Sir C. Douglas) entirely agreed, for it was the only opinion to which any one with the noble Lords' knowledge, and experience, could come who had attentively read the evidence taken before that committee. But as the attention of Parliament and the country had been called to its report and proceedings, he felt it to be his duty, to notice it on the present occasion. He held in his hand a copy of a petition, from the merchants and manufacturers of Ashton-under-Line, and a report from the Chamber of Commerce, at Manchester, by which he found that they considered the evidence taken before that committee as "valuable and extraordinary," and they stated it to be.

"Evidence the more important, as it is in a great measure not that of individuals whose own interests are in question, and liable, therefore, to be warped by their judgment, but the evidence of men placed in official situations, and giving their calm and deliberate opinions."

Now, he was willing to admit the intelligence and ability of those gentlemen, especially of Messrs. Deacon Hume, M'Gregor, and Porter, whose opinions were worthy of consideration, though by their evidence they directly contradicted each other. But while he admitted its value, and also its extraordinary character, he must deny that as evidence it was either fair or impartial. On the contrary, he could not conceive anything more unfit for the foundation of legislation than the evidence of men in official situations, who were naturally most anxious to state those facts only, which would support their preconceived opinions; opinions which were of no more value than those of any other intelligent private individuals. He had stated on a former evening that the report of that committee, and the evidence taken before it, was calculated to give an unfair, because a partial, view of the case; and he would not now weary the House by repeating the grounds of that statement. An analysis had been circulated through the country, which, however correct, as far as it went, omitted much that was important, and affected to show indirectly

that the committee had been unanimous, and he thought that so far it was most insidious and unfair. It ought at least to have given the amendment which he had moved in the committee, to the effect that the evidence was valuable, but at the same time so partial and limited, that they could only venture to report the evidence and recommend the re-appointment of a committee this Session to continue the investigation. It was true he was in a minority of two to five—but the committee, though appointed on the 8th of May, was composed of nine gentlemen from the Government or Anti-Corn-Law party, and only six from his, (the Opposition,) side of the House; of those six, only two, himself and his hon. Friend, the Member for Whitby, had been able to attend, for the committee did not meet for two months, viz., not till the 6th of July, and it was too much to expect that Members whose residence was not in London, should remain in town to enter on the labour of a committee at that late period of the Session. It would be said, the committee did not meet sooner because the hon. Member for Kilkenny, was engaged in the banking committee—but was that any excuse for the hurry and partiality with which this important committee had been conducted? They met on the 6th of July, sat fourteen days, examined twenty-nine witnesses, and reported on the 6th of August, after resisting his amendment, which in effect only asked for further evidence on so important a subject; but impartiality would not have answered the purpose. The witnesses, and the majority understood each other, and when he proposed to call a gentleman connected with the Iron trade, after Sir John Guest had given his evidence, he was told "Oh! yes, bring your friend," but then he found that every day was pre-engaged by witnesses who came ready primed to give answers in accordance with the views of the majority of the committee; and thus practically they refused all other evidence. So much for the fairness of the constitution, and for the liberality and impartiality of the proceedings which prevailed in the Committee selected to enquire into the Import duties! Now with reference to the question of sugar, as regarded slavery and the slave-trade, it had been urged as a matter of reproach against the party with which he had the honour to act, that the course which was now proposed

by the amendment of his noble Friend, the Member for Liverpool, was a new course taken up for party purposes, and it was said, that they had for years encouraged slavery, and now, for the first time, set themselves up as its opponents. He presumed that taunt was not meant to apply to those who formerly acted with Gentlemen opposite, but to that great party called Tory or Conservative, of which he presumed Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington would be admitted to have been the representatives; and he (Sir C. Douglas) was prepared to prove, by indisputable testimony, namely, by reference to State papers, that the course which, as a party, Gentlemen on his side of the House had always taken, was exactly that they took now, in opposition to the encouragement of slavery now proposed by her Majesty's Ministers. In the years 1814 and 1815, previous to, and at the Congress of Vienna, the subject had been mooted, and instructions given from Lord Liverpool's Government to negotiate with foreign powers, for the purpose of putting an end to slavery and the slave-trade, by entering into treaties to bind each other to do the reverse of that which was now proposed by her Majesty's Government, namely, to prohibit the importation of colonial slave-labour produce. He would make one or two quotations. The first was from a letter of Lord Castlereagh to the Duke of Wellington, dated Foreign-Office, 6th of August, 1814:—

"We must be prepared for a reluctance on the part of certain Powers to adopt the limited measure, (abolition of slavery at the end of five years) and it becomes necessary to consider how the interest of those Powers may be made to operate in support of their duties; how they can be deprived of the unjust advantage of profiting by the sacrifices and forbearance of other States, which, from a sense of moral duty, forsake this species of commerce. Nothing seems more likely to have this effect than for the Powers, acting in concert to prohibit the importation, into their respective dominions, of colonial produce, grown within the territories of Powers refusing to enter into the proposed concert."

And in a letter from Lord Castlereagh to Lord Bathurst, dated Geneva, 3rd September, 1814:—

"I have only to observe, that I opened to the Prince of Benevento the idea of a concurrent system for repressing the slave-trade, and a league against the import of colonial produce, grown by states dissentient from the general policy."



Now, it would be said, that all this ended in no practical good. As far as the other parties were concerned that was true; but our endeavours were good—they were the same then as our object now. As a party we acted then, as at present, represented by Lord Castlereagh, Lord Bathurst, and the Duke of Wellington; and he used these records to show, that those statesmen even then did all in their power to extinguish slavery and the slave-trade, by refusing to agree to any such scheme as that which her Majesty's Government had now propounded. He must quote one more document from the state papers. It was a letter from Lord Castlereagh to Earl Bathurst, dated Vienna, the 2nd of January, 1815, and had reference to the intervention with Russia on the same subject. Lord Castlereagh said:—

“The Emperor listened with much attention to every part of my statement, and particularly to this in which I endeavoured to show, that upon reasonable notice, the Powers of Europe would not only be justified, but bound in morality and sincerity, to exclude from their ports colonial produce grown within the dominions of states which refused to adopt the principle of abolition. That to do so must at once be effectual; and to do less was to make themselves parties, in breach of their promises, to the crimes and scandal to which their demand for colonial produce gave occasion, and which they ought preferably to supply from those countries where the culture was not carried on by newly-imported slaves.”

He thought he had now made out a case which must put an end to the attack made upon his side by Gentlemen opposite, that it was only on the present critical moment they had sprung up to give an opposition to slavery and the slave-trade, and had refused to join in any measure which could give encouragement to slavery. On the question of the sugar-duties, it would not become him to enter after the unanswered, because unanswerable, speech of his noble Friend, Lord Stanley. The conduct of the Government on this question confirmed his opinion as to the insincerity of their purpose, and the satisfaction he felt in every vote he had given against them. Was this a question of finance or of national policy? If the former, why did not the Chancellor of the Exchequer bring it forward and give to the House the data on which he made his speculations? If it were the latter, of course it could not have been contingent on the late majorities of

eleven and twenty-one against Ministers, but must have been long contemplated, and ought to have been well considered, and they were bound, in fairness to their opponents, and in justice to their friends, and to their people, to have announced their intentions in a speech from the Throne upon the subject, as one of national policy and vital importance. This they should have done, even considering what was due to themselves, for his own part he did not think the general plan had been so long in contemplation. The proposition emanated from that unconstitutional tenacity of office for which her Majesty's Ministers were proverbial. They never had the confidence of the House of Lords; they had lost that of the Commons, and only retained that of the Crown, by deceiving her Majesty, as to the true feelings and opinions of the people. They dared not appeal to the country, unless they could first create such excitement by raising delusive hopes as to make it impossible for any party to govern in safety and hence the Budget of the Government. If this were not a proof of an unconstitutional tenacity of office, he knew not what was. He maintained, that her Majesty's Ministers had deceived the country, with regard to their promises of peace, retrenchment, and reform. He had always advocated, on safe principles, those great ends, and always would. The Government, while they had a majority in that House, brought forward no practical measures of reform, and had made no retrenchment, but, on the contrary, had increased the expenditure of the country; but when they had lost the confidence of the House, then they made a proposition they could not carry; for no object whatever, but to deceive the people and create excitement. As to peace, we were at war in India and China, and no one could foretell the limit of the expense. He knew no party in the country would believe their professions. Upon what could any one have made more solemn assertions as to principle, than they had upon the appropriation of Church property, a principle they asserted to obtain office, which they deserted to retain office? and so again would they abandon these or any other views, as occasion might suit them: and after such conduct, no man would believe their sincerity with respect to corn, timber, or sugar. He was glad to see the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), for he would not say that be-

hind a man's back which he would not say to his face. He did not wish to apply what he was about to quote to any one personally, but to the Government as a body. Mr. Fox had once said, "He must be an infamous man who on coming into place could abandon the professions he had made when out of place." How that quotation would apply to the Government, he would leave it to the country to judge.

Sir Henry Parnell denied that any kind of improper influence had been used to obtain credit for the Report on Import Duties. The description of the witnesses which had been found fault with by the hon. Member, who had just sat down, was perfectly correct. No witness could have been more free from motives to give partial and interested evidence than Mr. M'Gregor, Mr. Deacon Hume, and Mr. Porter,—they were not merchants, nor landlords, nor theorists in matters of political economy, and it was because they were witnesses, in every respect, so unexceptionable, their evidence had produced so great an effect throughout the country. As to the evidence being of a party character, the hon. Member should have remembered, that Mr. Deacon Hume had been thirty years in office under a Tory Government. What, in point of fact, had made the Report on Import Duties a document of such vast and universal influence in leading public opinion to a right judgment on the effects of protecting and differential duties, was its own intrinsic merits. The facts contained in it were so clearly set forth, and so amply supported by experience, that the conclusions they led to, were, at the same time, quite easy of comprehension and wholly irresistible. These facts, when brought forward by unbiased witnesses, and applied in detail to all the circumstances by which the price of commodities are increased, produced a conviction which other persons had failed to produce. It had frequently been attempted in this House and out of this House, to show how many millions a-year the public paid in consequence of protecting duties; but the reasoning necessary to be employed to establish this case being unavoidably abstruse and difficult to be made intelligible, the public went on paying these millions in ignorance of the cause which made them so much out of pocket. What, therefore, the report has chiefly effected; and whatever has made it take such hold on the mind of the nation, is the explanation it afforded of the operation of every protecting duty to raise

price, and of the immense amount of indirect taxation which the system of protecting duties has imposed on the people. These protecting duties affect almost all prices. There are no less than eighty-four articles of colonial produce subject to differential and protecting duties, including sugar, coffee, timber, &c.; besides these, every production of land is protected, it is not only corn, but meat, butter, cheese, hops, malt, bacon, vegetables, seeds, &c.—every thing that the land grows. There are also several of our manufactures still enhanced in price by protection, so that, when it is considered what vast quantities of these various articles are consumed in the United Kingdom, it is evident that the amount of indirect taxation imposed by the protecting duties must be immensely large. The hon. Baronet has said, he did not see any reason to doubt the correctness of the statements of Mr. M'Gregor and Mr. Deacon Hume, that the sum taken out of the pockets of the public by indirect taxation (none of which went into the Treasury, but all to the pockets of the protected classes) was equal to the whole direct taxation which was paid into the Exchequer, that is, to fifty millions a-year. Those statements had now been before the public for several months, but none has ever come forward to contradict them, or even to question their correctness. They cannot, in point of fact, be contradicted; and, therefore, the effect of the system of protecting duties is established to be the making of the public pay fifty millions a-year more for what they have occasion to buy than they would pay if no protecting duties were in existence. But, if the protecting duties were abolished, then the public would have fifty millions a-year more to spend in purchasing additional comforts and luxuries than they are now able to spend in this way; and if the operation of such an increased expenditure is traced out, it will then be seen how the abolishing of the protective duties will improve the revenue, promote commerce, and remove the distress of the industrious classes. Of these fifty millions, which the public would have more than it now has to spend, a large portion would be spent on articles subject to taxation, and in this way the revenue augmented. That some millions a-year would be added to the revenue by abolishing the protecting duties, is fully proved by the evidence given before the Committee. Again, as to commerce and manufactures, a great portion of these fifty

millions would be spent in buying the products of commerce and manufactures. Trade of every kind, and manufacturers of every description, would be encouraged and extended, while the increased employment of labour, which would be the consequence, would relieve the industrious classes from the distress which they now suffer; so that it is evident that, if the measures proposed by Government were adopted by the House, they would greatly contribute, by removing the direct taxation which arises from the differential and protective duties, to secure the three objects of the amendment of the noble Lord, the Secretary of the Colonies, namely—to restore our falling revenue, to extend our crippled commerce, and to remove the distress of the industrious classes. With respect to the question more immediately under the consideration of the House, that is, the proposed reduction in the duties on foreign sugar, a very unfair representation has been made of this proposed reduction. It has been assumed, that it will admit an unlimited quantity of foreign sugar into the market, and thus ruin our sugar colonies; whereas, in point of fact, what is proposed is only the changing of our prohibitory duty into another prohibitory duty. The one, namely—the existing duty, is merely a complete prohibition of the importation of foreign sugar; while the proposed duty will be a prohibitory duty when prices are low; and will admit sugar only when prices become excessively high. Now, if the statements are correct that have been made respecting the supply of sugar that will be provided by our own colonies in this or future years, then the prices will be so low that there cannot be any importation under the proposed new duty, and consequently it will not be attended with any injurious effect to the interests of our sugar colonies. But the proper way of discussing and considering the question of what should be the duty on foreign sugar, should be with reference to the means of our colonies to carry out competition with foreign sugar. It seems to be supposed, that foreigners have advantages which afford no hope of a successful competition with them; but this is not the case, for the means of carrying on competition may be greatly extended. Hon. Members had wholly lost sight in the course of the debate of the bill that has been introduced by the President of the Board of Trade, and is now before the House for reducing the duties on imports into the colonies. This reduction of duties will

afford great benefits to the manufacturers of sugar—it will diminish the prices of flour and provisions of all descriptions, and the price of timber, and various other articles which are necessary for making sugar, and in this way the cost of making sugar will be greatly diminished, and the power of carrying out competition increased. This measure is in fact a full compensation to the colonies for the proposed reduction of the duty on foreign sugar. About fourteen or fifteen years ago those Members of the House who were connected with the West Indies, were very loud in complaining of the injury which the sugar makers sustained, and other interests from the high duties on imports into the colonies, and from the system of restrictions under which the trade of the colonies was placed. Returns were called for by which it was attempted to be made to appear, by showing the prices of food, timber, and other things, in foreign countries, that these duties and restrictions added 70 per cent. to the cost of making sugar; and persons of the highest authority in West Indian affairs went so far as to say, that they would willingly give up the monopoly of the English market if all these restrictions were removed. As to the importance which about that time the planters attached to these restrictions, the evidence given before the committee of finance, of 1828, by the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, may be referred to. At that time the noble Lord filled the office of Secretary at War, and when under examination by the committee regarding the expense incurred by the army kept up in the colonies, stated, that he had frequently applied to the various governments of the colonies to contribute towards the expense of paying the army, but that the answer he received from them was “We would very readily contribute a large portion of the expense, provided the restrictions on our trade were taken off, but that so long as those restrictions are continued we are not able to give the least assistance. It may be said, the bill of the President of the Board of Trade does not go far enough in the way of reducing duties on imports into the colonies. This may be true; but if the colonists will, on their part, meet further reductions as they ought to do, by giving up their monopoly, there can be no good reason for not taking off all the restrictions on the trade of the colonies. They should be allowed to send their productions direct to foreign countries, to purchase all kinds of foreign productions free of duty, and even to em-

ploy foreign ships. The trade of the colonies should be rendered perfectly free; and if that were so, no British interests would suffer; for the colonies would find it to their advantage to use British productions and to employ British ships. If, however, all restrictions were taken off, the whole of the grounds would be removed on which the colonies could claim to have any longer the monopoly of the British market; for, according to the original arrangement by which this monopoly was established, the monopoly of the markets of the colonies was considered a sufficient compensation, giving the colonies the monopoly of the British market, and the highest West Indian authorities may be referred to, in order to show that if the mother country abandoned the monopoly of the colonial markets, the colonies could no longer claim any just right to enjoy the monopoly of the market of the mother country. This doctrine has been explicitly laid down by Lord Sheffield, in one of his publications in defence of the rights of the colonies, and no one can be referred to of higher authority in anything where the interests of the West Indies were concerned. He says—

“The British dominions are as much entitled to the monopoly of the markets of the British West Indies, as the latter are entitled to those of the former, and whenever that monopoly is given up, it will be the highest absurdity not to open all the British ports to foreign raw sugar.”

The true policy therefore, to pursue with regard to the sugar duties and all other duties on colonial productions, is to take a bold course, and at once abolish all restrictions on the colonial trade, and to connect with this measure such a gradual reduction of the protecting duties on colonial productions as would get rid in time of all monopoly, and give the public the advantage of obtaining all colonial productions at the lowest possible prices. The hon. Baronet proceeded to say, that there were other ways of increasing the means of the colonies to carry on competition with foreign sugar, one of them was, the proper extension and management of free labour. It was commonly taken for granted, that slave-labour in itself gave the employer of it an advantage over the employer of free labour, but the fact was, that the advantage that the employers of slave labour had, arose from their being free of all restrictions and taxes in obtaining the food they wanted for their slaves, and the materials they wanted for making sugar. If the colonies were relieved

from such restrictions, then free labour would be placed on an equal footing with slave labour, and then all the advantages of free labour would soon show themselves in favour of our colonies. They would in point of fact be able to sell sugar cheaper than the employer of slave-labour could sell it, and in course of time the superiority of free labour would become so great over slave labour that those countries which now employed slave labour, would be obliged to employ free labour. Now, as the reduction of the duty on foreign sugar would, no doubt, excite greater energy in our colonies to improve the fabrication of sugar, and to diminish the cost of making sugar, it would seem that the best course to take for getting rid of slave labour would be by reducing the duty on foreign sugar, and consequently that such a proceeding ought not to be held out, as it has been a cause of extending and establishing slave labour. That the reduction of the duty on foreign sugar, would have the effect of improving the processes of making sugar in our colonies, and of reducing the price of it, there can be no doubt, for the effect of protection is to stop all invention and improvement. This has always been the case with regard to everything that has been protected. Before Mr. Huskisson took off the prohibition of the importation of foreign silks, the same machinery continued in use which had been introduced a hundred years before, when the silk manufacturer was first established. As Mr. Porter says in his evidence, protection sets every one asleep, and it is only owing to the protection our colonies possess, that the fact has occurred of the proposal of making sugar in the island of Cuba, being superior to those in our colonies. If all that has been suggested with regard to removing the restriction on the trade of the colonies, the extension and management of free labour, and the exciting of the colonies to increased exertions in improving the making of sugar were accomplished, there then would exist no grounds to apprehend that our colonies would be unable successfully to carry on competition in all foreign markets, with every country that produced sugar, and their prosperity would be placed on a sure and lasting foundation. With regard to the corn question, the hon. Baronet said, he had so often given his opinions to the House on this subject, that he would not then say more upon it than express his regret that landowners did not take the trouble of obtaining accurate information

respecting the price at which foreign corn could be imported into this country; for he felt sure, that if they were to do so, they would see reason to abandon all apprehension of a reduction of rents under the protection of a duty of 8s. a quarter for wheat. Although a friend to the total repeal of the Corn-laws, he wished to see a fixed duty laid on sooner than to see the present sliding scale of duty continued. He hoped the disposition which seemed to prevail among the landed interest last year in favour of a fixed duty would be restored, for if some change did not take place in the laws, it was quite certain that every bad harvest would hereafter be followed by the same universal convulsion that occurred after the harvest of 1828. The same sudden importation of increased quantities of corn would take place, the same sudden exportation of bullion to pay for it, and the same derangement of the currency of trade; and, with these evils, the severe distress of the industrious classes, which the country had been exposed to during the last three years.

Sir *Eardley Wilmot* said, that he had been anxious to have followed the hon. Member for Lincoln on the previous evening, because he had been much surprised to hear him announce his intention of voting against the amendment; more particularly, because, when he had the honour of making a motion two years ago for the extinction of the apprenticeship clause, that hon. Gentleman had made a most brilliant and effective speech in his support which no Gentleman had thought proper to answer, and upon a division, the motion was carried by ninety-six to ninety-three. Not only that, but the hon. Gentleman attended, immediately after the division, a meeting of the Anti-slavery Committee in Palace-yard, and again made a second speech, which was rapturously received. For his part, he thought that the distress and difficulty of the West-Indian interest was entirely occasioned by the proprietors themselves, by their obstinate opposition to the abolition of slavery, and to their unchristian conduct during the apprenticeship. To them he would not shew the slightest favour; but if he would not show them favour he would not deny them justice. He would grant that to any man—the lowest of mankind, or the bitterest of enemies; and therefore, as they had, since the abolition of slavery, endeavoured to redeem their former conduct by their present exertions, to better

the condition of the blacks, and were making efforts to produce a sufficient supply of sugar by free labour, he thought it most unjust to them, as well as to the East Indies, to weaken or destroy their interests. In another point of view, however, to him the greatest and most convincing, he considered the intended proposal of the Government to be the means of introducing slave-grown sugar into this country; and nothing, therefore, should induce him to assist any measure which would effect such a detestable object. As to the question of corn and timber, he should say nothing now. But when Gentlemen talked of the time being come for these alterations, it was saying this:—“So long as our supporters only mutiny, and continue to vote for us, the time is not come; but when they not only mutiny but desert, then the time is come, to agitate the people, and endeavour to send them *en masse* to support us.”

Mr. *Fitzharding Berkeley*, after assuring the House that he felt the full value of their time, in that protracted state of the debate, and would not trespass upon it at any length, expressed his entire concurrence in the principle on which the budget was founded—that principle being the increase of the revenue by reducing the actual burden of taxation upon the people. He rejoiced at the declared intention of Ministers to revise the Corn-laws, and he was certain that that intention would be received among his constituents, as well as throughout the whole country, with the greatest satisfaction. Great commercial and manufacturing cities, in particular, were deeply interested in that question; for that odious tax—that tax upon bread—was a palsy upon honest industry, and a greivous evil to the working classes. He could not but applaud the policy which prompted Ministers to draw closer the commercial ties between England and the Brazils. As regarded the cry raised against Ministers respecting the slave-trade, he considered that it had no validity in it, for he felt certain that a close treaty and extended commercial connexion between England and the Brazils, would be far more likely to produce the extinction of the slave-trade than armed intervention; for that had hitherto, without materially reducing the traffic in slaves, decidedly added to the horrors inflicted on the unfortunate captives. That, however, he

might not be misunderstood in the vote he was about to give, he had stated these his sentiments as regarded the principle of the budget, and the declarations of Ministers. But, at the same time, he could not conceal from himself that we were now trying the issue of a great experiment in the West Indies. It was not too much to say, that upon the result of that issue depended the question of the liberty or slavery of the African race all over the world. This country had struggled for the abolition of slavery for many years; we had obtained the boon; we were taunted by the whole slave-holding world that we were only seeking a chimerical good—an impracticable object. Our success in carrying out the abolition of slavery in our own colonies would be the decisive refutation of that opinion; but could we insure success without granting a larger extension of time to the West-India planters before we called upon them to compete with the slave-labour of Cuba and the Brazils? He sincerely believed not. If the experiment failed, the African race would be in a worse condition than they were before, and America, whom he taunted with its slave-holding propensities, might taunt us in return for our failure and our folly. He did not for a moment venture to assert that this term of probation should be extended for any great length of time, for he felt that the time was fast advancing when the principles of free trade must be everywhere recognised; but at the present moment he felt that that time was not come when the West-India proprietors should be called upon to compete, in the infancy of their free institutions, with slave-labour. There had been a time when the West-India proprietors deemed that the cause of humanity was incompatible with their interests; that day had passed away, and he could now advocate their cause without sacrificing his principles. He and his hon. Colleague had the honour of representing one-sixth of the West-India interest. Had he represented the whole of that interest, he never would have allowed that to weigh with him for one moment in his advocacy of the abolition of slavery. He was now most anxious to see that great experiment successfully carried out; and he thought that the best means of rendering it successful was by supporting the resolution of the noble Lord.

Mr. J. Parker regretted, that his hon. Friend, the Member for Warwickshire, as a distinguished philanthropist, had not exercised a little more of that charity in which, for more distant objects, his nature so much abounded, in judging of the motives which had induced the Queen's Government to lay their present propositions before the House. If his hon. Friend would give their conduct a somewhat more impartial consideration, he would find ample reasons, in the existing state of the commerce and the finances of the country, for the course they had adopted, and would, he was sure, not have concluded with the imputation of motives so discreditable and disingenuous as those in which he was most sorry to see his hon. Friend had too wantonly indulged. His right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at a period of great commercial depression and considerable financial difficulty, had either to propose new taxes, or to avail himself of the principles developed in the Committee on Import Duties, which, at the same time that they would give a stimulus to our manufacturing interests, would replenish the Exchequer, without adding to,—but, on the contrary, with an alleviation of the burthens of the people. Now, in regard to one of the articles on which a reduction of duties was proposed—viz. the subject matter of the present debate—he regretted to find, that the exciting question of slavery had been brought to bear upon the good feelings and passions of the public. He, for one, yielded to none in his detestation of the slave-trade, and of slavery; and at a period when hon. Gentlemen opposite, and those who preceded them on those benches in the advocacy of Tory politics, were not over strenuous in their assistance, the party to which he was attached had achieved this proudest conquest of humanity, and in pursuance of the great principles which characterized the policy of Mr. Fox, and had continued the cardinal point of action with the party down to the administration of Earl Grey, would continue faithful to the end, and would continue to watch over the happiness, and new-born liberty of the negro population. But he was bound also to advocate the relaxation of commercial imposts, and to give, so far as he could by legislation, a wider base and a more extended action to our commerce. He was bound to watch with equal solicitude over the comforts and the happiness of our own population; and in the action of an humanity not less extended

and not less wise than that of Gentlemen opposite, he was bound to take care, that, in devotedness to the negro cause, he inflicted no unnecessary injury, and attached no needless burthens on our countrymen. Hon. Members should recollect that they had a population at home which demanded their anxious care—that they had constituents who were deeply interested in trade and commerce, and who called in tones of impatience for a change in our commercial system. [*Ironical Cheers.*] Yes, he had constituents, and he would stand up for them in that House, whether electors or non-electors, whether directly armed by the constitution with the power of influencing that assembly, or excluded from direct representation. He would disregard the potent cheers of the hon. Member for Surry, and state his determination to procure for his constituents, so far as he was able, cheap bread, cheap sugar, and cheap timber, and to vindicate, for their good and the general good of all, the great principles of commercial freedom, so far as those objects could be combined with safety to the national faith, and with advantage to the revenue. He believed, that the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was admirably constructed for those purposes. They might be defeated on the division; he cared not whether they won or lost; but the principles of the budget would go deep into the heart and understanding of the nation, and he no more doubted its eventual success than he did the uprising of to-morrow's sun. The party to which he was attached would continue to advance the cause of commercial freedom. They would labour in it as they had done in other causes for the good of the people of England. They would triumph in it, as they had done against other monopolies in state and trade. It would be found that their opinions would be adhered to with constancy on which side soever of the House they might hereafter sit; and the hon. Member for Newark would discover, that though in the eye of his superior wisdom, and less fallible mind, their conduct might savour of what he called "judicial blindness or infatuation;" yet, that he would not see amongst the noble and right hon. Friends with whom he (Mr. Parker) acted, any such instances of "laxity of principle," as might be found in the recent history of the other side of the House in many matters of great moment; and, unless he was greatly deceived, would be found again at no distant period, if the right hon. Baronet, the

Member for Tamworth, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, was destined to produce a Budget to the House of Commons; and had to choose between the sound principles of his right hon. Friend, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the imposition of new taxes on the country. The budget rested on two necessities—the want of money for our Exchequer—the want of employment for our people. His right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, might well be congratulated that his remedy for both was one and the same, and that instead of raising money at the expense of trade, and hazarding operations which would necessarily pull different ways, the present scheme acted with a confluence of advantage on both these objects, and whilst it was made as clear to his mind as demonstration, that it would give the chances and the beginnings of an indefinite extension to our trade, would also, by the calculations of the most able authorities of the empire, supply the national purse with adequate resources. Now what was the state of trade? Had Government exaggerated the condition of the working population, or found, in over-statements of the present depression in the north of England, arguments more plausible than sound for their proposed remedies. For his part he could state, that he never remembered his own constituents, or the great manufacturing community with which he was connected, in so prostrate a condition of despondency and distress. He could state, that throughout the West Riding of the county of York, a similar condition of things prevailed. He had no sources of information over and above that which hon. Members enjoyed from communication with their constituents. But he would state to the House, that he had conversed within a short time with an old friend of his, well known to many Members around him, Mr. Francis Mande, of Wakefield, a gentleman, who for fifty years, or not much less, had practised as a Commissioner of Bankrupts in the West Riding; and that gentleman had assured him, without any reference to the present debate, that he never remembered a state of trade and commerce so distressing to the parties engaged in it, or a time when the humbler classes were suffering equal privations and adversity. In short, the universal opinion was, that something must be done by Government and that House, to relax the fetters which bound down the energies of the country. It would not do to exclaim with the right hon. Member for

the university of Cambridge, "Let things alone." That was a sentiment worthy of a Legislator if no fetters existed; but in the present state of things, "to let trade alone," was to say that it shall be sacrificed to the monopolies under which the few were flourishing, but the many were distressed. In such a state of things no paternal Government could stand idle. It was not consistent with their duty to let these fetters alone—on the contrary, the condition of things he had described, super-added to the wants of the revenue, was the best recommendation of the measures supported by his noble Friends around him, and which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had introduced from a paramount sense of duty, and not from the too sordid and discreditable motives attributed to her Majesty's Government by the Member for Warwickshire. He, for one, considered, that for the reasons on which their Budget was based, the real philanthropy was on the side of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He believed, too, that the country was of the same opinion. Was it not true, that the anti-slavery movement was a failure? The Liverpool society had repudiated the motion of the noble Member for Liverpool—the Manchester society had discovered him—the Wakefield society had done the same, and even in the vast assembly of Exeter Hall itself, he had heard, that on this very day symptoms of insubordinate humanity had exhibited themselves, and that the good sense of the meeting under the guidance of gentlemen who had served in the Anti-slavery cause, somewhat longer than the noble Lord, had risen in refractory protestation against the hasty and ill-advised attempts to assist Toryism under the sacred and holy name of negro emancipation. But without following up the course of reasoning, by which the arguments of the noble Lord in this part of the question, have been annihilated, he would remind the House that on various occasions the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, had urged most strongly upon Government the policy of reducing the duties upon raw cotton. Many a time and oft, in every budget for several years, had the right hon. Baronet urged this point; last year, he believed, no less assiduously than formerly; yet he never found the noble Lord protesting against this too secular advice. True it is, that cheaper imposts would attract more cotton—that more cotton would employ more slaves, that the requirement of more slaves would give an impetus to the breeding

grounds of the Southern States of North America—and that every pound by which we increased our imports of that commodity would *pro tanto* give strength and fresh incitements to the abominable system of those provinces; but the noble Lord was as silent as the grave—he remembered the subliminary interests of Liverpool. The extension of its trade, the manifest advantages which would accrue to that vast emporium from the reduction of these duties, overwhelmed the sublime consideration which actuated his mind in this debate, and the noble Lord did not make an Anti-slavery protest against the secular recommendation of the right hon. Baronet. He seldom addressed the House, and was always more pleased to hear the great principles to which he was attached vindicated by his Friends around him, than to take a prominent part in their debates—but he remembered when last year, under the influence which he owed to his constituents, he took a very humble part in the discussion of the corn laws—he was reprimanded by the right hon. Baronet for stating his full conviction that the time was come when Parliament ought to consider this great subject with a view to its settlement—and that it became Gentlemen on all sides of the House to remove from agitation and acerbity so vital and so dangerous a controversy. He was told, that such a sentiment was in mutiny against his Friends, and that he, an humble member of her Majesty's Government, was virtually pronouncing a condemnation against the Cabinet under which he was proud to serve. Now, if that was true then, it was true no longer; but the right hon. Baronet might see in the union and decision of the Cabinet the best prospect of bringing at length this most exciting subject to a rational adjustment, with the co-operation of the great interests, falsely considered in hostility, and to the manifest, and incontestable good of the community. He believed, that her Majesty's Government had these great objects in view; and he was convinced that they had pursued the proper course. It was necessary to enlarge our range of commercial action, to open new markets, and to endeavour to recover old ones. This could only be done by arming the Minister for Foreign Affairs, with power to negotiate with other states. With what ability and energy the noble Lord near him would use such power, the House well knew, and could appreciate. Did he stand in any other situation, he would state the advantages which the great



experience of that noble Lord would ensure for his commercial countrymen; but the more they enabled that noble Lord to say to other countries, "we will reciprocate our respective advantages whether derived from nature or from art"—the more they enabled him to say to Prussia and to Germany; "We will take your timber and your corn;" to the United States;—"We will take on more liberal terms the bread-stuffs, and produce of your soil;" to the Brazils—"we will take your sugar and your coffee"—the more the noble Lord could impress upon foreign states, the idea that we were a people whose Custom-house was not hermetically sealed against everything which we could produce ourselves: that we wished on fair and rational terms of reciprocity, to trade with the whole world; that whilst we wished to sell, we were not unwilling to buy—the more they enabled him to hold this language, and to carry out into his diplomacy, the liberal principles in trade and commerce, which from our vast natural and acquired advantages, it was our manifest interest to inculcate, and which from our extended connexions over the whole globe, must bring to us the wealth and riches of all the kingdoms of the earth—the more they instructed the noble Lord to take this course, the more our foreign diplomacy would become distinguished; and great and successful as it already was, would make England not only the workshop, but more than ever the admiration of the world. [*Ironical cheers.*] He understood the cheers of hon. Members opposite. He regretted to see an anti-commercial spirit on those benches; he would rather have inferred that they had profited by the advice of the right hon. Member for Tamworth; and learnt from his speech of last year, that manufactures and commerce are the principal sources of agricultural prosperity. For his part, he would rather see gentlemen contending with emulous rivalry to augment their trade and commerce, and the manufacturing interest would then see with pleasure any further addition of landed prosperity. This was a contest into which, if rightly understood, they could safely enter, for the course which enriches one, will not impair the other interest. We ask to be enriched, and to enrich you also. We ask you to suffer your own resources to be augmented by the augmentation of ours. We ask for a portion of that light, which we wish to borrow from the same lamp of national prosperity; and which, whilst it gives us illumination and

comfort, does not add a particle of obscurity to you. This might be a selfish argument, but, nevertheless, it was a true one; and he would put it to them not to suspend their co-operation till the time was gone. Our trade and commerce required more space and room. We were not asking for monopolies, but we petitioned for the liberty of self-development by being relieved from the monopolies of others. He would thank the House for its attention, and had he not felt that the representative of a community so active and intelligent as his constituents—so deeply interested in the extension of our commercial system—so deeply suffering the privations which our present system has brought upon them—could not do his duty and be silent, he would not have troubled the House.

Mr. D'Israeli was struck with one observation which had fallen from the hon. Member for Sheffield, that it was very seldom one remedy was found sufficient to effect a cure of two complaints; but that in this instance her Majesty's Government had happily devised a plan that met the complicated evil they had to deal with. Why, all quack medicines partook of this universally healing virtue. The hon. Gentleman had observed, that the peculiar characteristic of the present measure was, that it would not only keep up the revenue, and replenish the coffers of the Exchequer, but that it would also increase the commerce of the country and keep in the Government. He thought the hon. Gentleman, when speaking on behalf of the Government, might have given those who sat on the Opposition side of the House, credit for having a sympathy for something better even than that of political power. With regard to the question immediately before the House, he observed, that there were two points which, during four nights' debate, and thirty hours' discussion, had been pretty nearly established. It seemed to have been proved to the satisfaction of the majority of the House, and he should say of the majority even of the other (the Ministerial) side of the House, that the supply of sugar from our own colonies was sufficient for the consumption of this country. That was a point much discussed, and he believed established. He thought also, that another point was established, namely, that in case the proposition of the Government were adopted,

the reduction of the price of sugar to the consumer, it would be almost impossible to calculate from its smallness. If so, it would follow, as the noble Lord the Member for Northumberland, who had put the debate upon the right footing, had stated, that the real question at issue was, whether the adoption of the proposition of the Government would open new markets to the British manufacturer. This was a point of the highest consideration—it was a consideration of the highest interest and importance; but if this were to be the result or the discussion, what were they to say to the noble Lord and to the right hon. Gentleman who opened the debate with the cry of cheap sugar; and with the picturesque description of the misery of the population of this country for want of cheap sugar, and with the lively description of the great benefits that must result to that population if the price of sugar were reduced. He confessed, he was somewhat struck with the want of keeping, in point of argument, when the noble Lord drew so touching a picture of the destitute condition of the people for want of cheap sugar, while he almost with ironical rhetoric described those very people as the great consumers of that article of trade. But if the result of this discussion should be, that even the adoption of the Government measure would not lessen the price of sugar, then he must say, that those noble Lords and right hon. Gentlemen who had dilated so much on the vast importance of the price of sugar being reduced, had been somewhat liberal in their imputations of cant and hypocrisy on hon. Gentlemen sitting on his (Mr. D'Israeli's) side of the House, because they had expressed sentiments which he believed were felt by the greater portion of the community, and had re-asserted opinions which they had always professed on the subject of slavery. The right hon. the Judge Advocate (Sir G. Grey), had been peculiarly liberal with his imputations upon hon. Gentlemen opposite to his side of the House. The hon. Gentlemen had described them even as Pharisees, thanking God, at the same time, he supposed, that the right hon. Gentleman was a placeman and a sinner. He would call upon the House to remark the extreme looseness of the details, and inaccuracy of information respecting the subject of the opening of new markets. The Chancellor of the Exchequer opened

his budget by shaking his head at the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, and dilating on the importance of entering into a commercial treaty with the Brazils, carrying on, as we did, with that country a commerce to the extent of five millions sterling. Now, on reference to the official documents, it appeared, that the amount of our exports to Brazil was about one-half that sum, the difference between the right hon. Gentleman's statement and the fact being two millions and a half. But he would call upon the House to recollect, that there were many peculiarities connected with the Brazils which would render it most probable that, as a market, it never would increase. Our trade with Brazil had been stationary. The greatest amount of exports to that country was in 1825, which was a year of extraordinary mercantile enterprise. In that year our exports to the Brazils exceeded three millions. But while they heard so much said of the Brazilian people, and of the Brazilian nation, and of the necessity of entering into a commercial treaty with the government of Brazils, it would be well for the House to recollect, that the population of the Brazils was only five millions, and that three millions of that population were negro slaves, and two hundred and fifty thousand were coloured slaves. Now it was generally agreed, that the population of slave states did not increase. But our exports to the Brazils were peculiarly adapted to a slave population. The articles were cheap and not of a very various character; we should therefore very greatly err if we compared the commerce of a country which was, after all, only a slave country, with our commerce with countries where there was no slavery—where there was an increasing population, and where the various wants of the various classes of society required as varied articles of consumption. He wished, now that her Majesty's Ministers had taken the foreign commerce of the country under their auspices, they would extend their patronage to our commerce with another country in the same hemisphere with the Brazils—he meant Mexico, where there was an increasing population, where there was no slavery, and where there existed a feeling strongly in favour of the English people. He had been informed on the best authority, that if the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,

had only condescended to consider the remonstrances made by the Mexican government, the merchants of this country might now have been trading with that country to the extent of a million and a half sterling in the year. But instead of that the ports of Mexico had been blockaded, her chief fortifications destroyed, her property sequestered, and besides not listening to her remonstrances, the expedition that was at length tardily sent out, arrived one day after the time it would have been of any service. To show the beneficial effects resulting from the relations formed by England with foreign states, he would remind the House of what had occurred with respect to Chili. Although one of the lesser independencies of South America, yet in consequence of our commercial relations with that country, our exports were greater to Chili than they were to Mexico and Peru taken together. He hoped hon. Gentlemen connected with the manufactures and commerce of this country would not take it as an offence if he undertook to show, that they were not absolutely ruined. He found, on tracing our past history, that complaints, of the decay of commerce and navigation had always existed in this country. In the days of Sir Robert Walpole the complaint was raised; Sir John Barnard stood up in the House of Commons, and stated, that the commercial energies of England were completely exhausted. They all knew, that there never was a more able minister than Sir Robert Walpole, or one who more completely understood the commercial genius of this country. But, in fact, instead of the commerce of the country being at that time in a state of exhaustion, it was scarcely in the swaddling clothes of commercial greatness. Similar complaints were made at the close of the American war. The merchants of London petitioned the House upon the subject, and one of Mr. Burke's strong arguments in support of his celebrated motion on economical reform was, that the resources of the country were depressed by the terrible decay of its trade and navigation. And yet did not every one at this day know, that the reign of George the 2nd, was the most prosperous reign of any Sovereign, that ever ruled this country? When Mr. Pitt first succeeded to power, and brought in all his great financial measures, there was the same despair for the trade and commerce

of the country. The merchants of Bristol were, in 1786, greatly alarmed at the depressed state of trade and navigation, and had been so at several subsequent periods. There was not one hon. Gentleman in the House, whatever his age might be, who would not recollect, that even before those greater periods of commercial depression the leading men of commerce were always talking as if the commercial energies of this country were in a state of decay. But what were the facts? If they referred to the only documents that were open to them on the subject they would find, that there was no evidence whatever of this decay. He knew, that hon. Gentlemen who took a desponding view of our trade and commerce, would argue thus:—"It is very true, that the amount of our exports is not only maintained, but even increased; but then the character of those exports is changed; and those exports were now of a description which indicated the future fall of our manufacturing power." That was a grave question; but every one must agree, that it could only be decided by the profoundest and most searching investigation. If they were called upon to debate this question in a committee of ways and means, it was absolutely necessary, that they should come, he did not say to a hasty or hurried, or even precipitate, but to a decided, urgent, and imperative decision. It was impossible that the ways and means of the country should be denied. But if they looked to the markets open to the commercial enterprise of this country, they would not find a particle of evidence to countenance the apprehension of decay, or even of decline, in our foreign trade. There might probably be a diminution of exports to some of the countries with which we traded, but it was with those countries whose markets were disturbed. Those who despaired of the prosperity of our commercial career, must look to the state of the market of China, must look to the state of the market of Turkey, must look to the state of the market of Egypt. They would find a reduction of the exports to those three countries amount to 1,100,000*l.* sterling; but no one could suppose that the tariff of England had produced those results. The diminution of exports had been occasioned by the policy of the Government. It was not just to attach any responsibility to the Opposition, for the present state of Chinese affairs; those who recollected the

debate on the Chinese question, must know, that no guarantee was given by them for the policy of the Government with respect to that country. Then, with regard to the affairs of the Levant, the Members on his side of the House had not said a word upon the subject. The hon. Member for Kilkenny had moved for papers and the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had said, that he could not give any opinion till those papers were produced. These were the three markets with respect to which there had been any visible and large diminution of foreign exports; and he asked, was it possible to ascribe that diminution to the English tariff? He could not believe, that there was any ground for the general idea which seemed to be so prevalent in that House, that the commercial energies of the country were at the least on a decline. There was not only no evidence of a declination of exports, except with respect to the three countries he had mentioned, and which he had accounted for, but he saw reasons for believing that our commercial career, so far from being in a state of decline, and as it had been said, the sun of our prosperity being about to set, we had not even yet reached our meridian eminence. Because, looking to the markets in South America, it was impossible not to see, that they would furnish immense demands for British manufactures. And then, independently of the three large and important markets in the Western hemisphere, to which he had referred, we had all the great markets of the olden world. There were, for instance, France, India, and Australia. You had actually doubled your exports to India alone, without reference to the contemplated alterations, which would enlarge your commerce there. In Australia, from exports amounting to 200,000*l.* or 300,000*l.* sterling, which was their extent in 1829, you had increased them now to 1,700,000*l.*; and in France, while in 1829 you had exported some 450,000*l.*, you were now exporting 2,500,000*l.* When he saw these facts, he could not all despair of our fortunes, even in the old world; but not only was the continent supplying us with a vast increase of demand, but, at this moment, we were penetrating to portions of the globe hitherto unexplored by our commerce, and were extending the navigation of the Danube, the Indus, and the Niger. Who, under

these circumstances, could despair of the commercial fortunes of the country? He protested against the principle laid down by the hon. Gentleman who last spoke, and by other hon. Gentlemen who had spoken, and who were acting on the part of the Government, of calling upon the House to consider the re-construction of the commercial policy of the greatest commercial nation in the world, at a moment of financial exigency. It was a result not to be attained by the measures to which they had resorted. The measures they insisted upon were founded on erroneous principles. The object they aimed at was one of the greatest importance, and if it were the result of the deliberations of a Cabinet Council, they should have brought it to the attention of the House in the usual manner. It should have been distinctly adverted to at the beginning of the Session. The President of the Board of Trade should have brought it on as a Cabinet measure, and should have moved for the appointment of a committee of trade and navigation, in order, that a body of evidence might have been produced to have assisted them in their deliberations. He was surprised, that the noble leader of the Administration in this House had thought fit to impute—what? Faction, to the right hon. Member for Tamworth. Whatever might be the attributes of the right hon. Baronet, he never believed, that faction would be charged against him, and, of all persons in the world, it came with the worst grace from the noble Lord; he was, of all persons, the last who should have made it. Why, if the right hon. Baronet had condescended to be factious, the noble Lord would not have been sitting in the place he occupied; and that he knew, as well as many of the friends by whom the noble Lord was surrounded. If, indeed, the right hon. Baronet, when out of office, had proposed certain abstract questions, and had asserted, that by carrying them into practice a Government could alone exist, and when he had obtained the place of the noble Lord, he had not carried them into practice, he would have been factious. If he had denounced as a rebel an individual whom he had subsequently found it convenient to make an ally, the right hon. Baronet might have been justly termed factious. If he had called out lustily “Justice to Ireland,” and had nevertheless always given his vote in fa-

your of measures tending to a coercion bill, the right hon. Baronet might have justly been called factious. Most of all, if he had come down last year, and had solemnly declared, that there was no basis for a system of Government for the country, but agricultural preponderancy, and had this year brought forward a proposition for a fixed duty on corn, undefined on the first night, hesitated about on the third night, and changed from 7s. 6d. to 8s. in the articulation, the right hon. Baronet might have indeed been called factious.

*Sir H. Verney* The remarks of the right hon. Member for Dundee, appear to have been lost on the hon. Member who last addressed the House, as he has not alluded to the statement made by that right hon. Baronet, of the advantages to the West India colonies from the removal which has taken place this Session, of the duties and restrictions on the importation of materials employed in the sugar manufactory. But the House will, I hope, not have been inattentive to those remarks, which, coming from such high authority, have, I must own, very much reconciled me to the absence of a proposal to reduce the duty on the import of West-Indian productions into this country. I entirely concur in the observations of the hon. Member for Maidstone, as to the importance of not neglecting our commercial intercourse with the independent republics of South America, but I must wholly dissent from his opinion regarding our commerce with Brazil. The hon. Gentleman considers it as of small importance, inasmuch as the population consists in so large a proportion of slaves. But Sir, are there none but slave-holding states who seek British manufactures in the interior of South America? I can assure the hon. Gentleman, that whole nations exist there, some of them native and aboriginal Indians, others of Spanish or Portuguese descent, who desire the productions of Europe, and that if these are not furnished by us, they will be furnished by our European rivals. I have met with German colonies in various parts of the South American continent, and heard Swabian accents on the rivers of those countries, and I have learnt from British merchants there, and Englishmen in those services, and from persons high in authority, that as this country refuses to receive the produce of Brazil, Brazil is entering into

commercial relations with the North German States. It is remarkable that now for the first time the interior of South America, is open and opening to the commerce of Europe. Look at the map of that continent—Mark its great rivers, all rising in the Andes or the high-plains East of Upper Peru, and pouring their waters in an easterly direction to the Atlantic Ocean. How vast are these rivers—how puny in comparison with them are the rivers of Europe. See the course of the Marañon and its tributary streams, the Madeira and Ucayali. Observe the river Plate, and trace the streams that flow into it, the Parana and Paraguay, the Veomejo and Pilcomayo. Who of us know even the names of these rivers. They are strange sounds to us, and strange they will remain, if this country by an unwise and restrictive policy abandons its commercial pre-eminence, and relinquishes the commerce of South America. I wish to hear from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the difficulties he has met with, and still more those which he anticipates, in making commercial treaties with other countries, and especially with Brazil and with the States of South America. I know the objections which those governments will raise. I know that Brazil will no longer consent to admit our manufactures if we pertinaciously refuse theirs. The treaty with that country by which it admits British manufactures, at an *ad valorem* duty of 15 per cent., while we are not bound to receive their productions, expires, according to our interpretation in 1844, according to theirs 1842. Will they be willing to renew it on such terms? Will they renew it on any terms unless we admit their productions? Of course they will not. And shall the House be told by the hon. Gentleman who addressed you last, that the natives are but slaves who will not consume our manufactures? Nations hardly known to us are anxious to receive them. I have seen the first bale of goods from Manchester or Sheffield, opened and exposed to the gaze of the wondering Indians. Some young clerk of a merchant's house in Valparaiso, Arequipa or Lima, starts with a couple of laden mules across the Andes. He seeks some Indian tribe—he disposes of his goods at the interest of 1,000 per cent., and the taste for European commodities spreads far and wide among the natives and ripens into a necessity. Consider

that hitherto the British merchant has sent his merchandise for the markets of Couzco and Potosi, and the countries east of the Cordillera, by the tedious and perilous passage round the Cape Horn. The great rivers to which I have adverted seem destined by nature to be the highways into the interior of the continent. We have rejected these advantages offered to us by Providence, and in these latter days of commercial enterprize, those rivers are less known to Europe than they were 200 years ago. I recollect having seen maps on which were marked the spots where naval engagements had taken place between the Spaniards ascending the tributary rivers of the river Plate, and the Portuguese, those of the Marañon; and the rival European nations had combated on the morasses and lakes whence the head waters of these rivers flow. The fact of canoes having ascended from the mouths to the sources of these rivers, proves the absence of rapids and falls. British naval officers and others have descended the Marañon through its whole extent—they have found that ships of 600 tons may ascend that river for 4,000 miles, and it is well known, that the countries to the south of the Marañon, those watered by the Ucayali and Veomejo, are remarkably healthy for Europeans, and that the British name is honoured above any foreign nation. The Brazilian treaty is expiring. Now is the time to open the rivers of Brazil to our commerce. The wars of independence, and the jealousy of Francia, ruler of Paraguay, long barred the Spanish American rivers to us. The war is terminated, and Francia is dead, and I would say most earnestly to British merchants, embark your capital in these regions, carry British commerce up the rivers of South America, and they will yield you a richer harvest than the rivers of Brazil or Peru. Here, then, is the question that we are called on to decide. Shall we be the nation to carry civilization into the interior of South America, augmenting, at the same time, the wealth, and glory, and power of our country? It is possible, that we shall reply to this question, not on its own merits, but with a view to drive the noble Lord below me from the Treasury Bench, and place the right hon. Baronet there in his stead. Is it not the first duty of this House to legislate for the pecuniary interest of the owners of sugar plantations in the West Indies? If it were so, who can

say that it has been neglected? We purged our country from the heinous national sin of slavery, and cheerfully paid 20,000,000*l.* to abolish it in the countries under our sway. We glory in the sacrifice—but are we now to refuse to hold commercial intercourse with a country because that country has not arrived at opinions respecting slavery, that were not ours ten years ago? Are we to deny to our manufacturers and merchants, the markets of Brazil and those further nations approachable by the Brazilian rivers because a portion of their productions are slave-grown? No, Sir, our duty is to confer on that vast population committed by Providence to our care every advantage and benefit that the Imperial Legislature can obtain for it, as to secure for them as cheaply, and in as great abundance as possible, the productions of other countries, and to open as wide a market as possible to British enterprise, capital, and skill. And are the growers of corn not interested in this question? I do not like addressing to my agricultural brethren a kind of argument, that I trust, would not weigh too much with myself; yet I would ask them to consider, whether it is not of importance to them, that their best market, their home market, should be as good as possible, their best customers as wealthy as any legislation of this House can render them. I would ask them, to look with me at some country that has been wealthy and now is poor—to consider, for instance, Spain: they will find in the metropolis and provincial capitals of the Peninsula, palaces far more magnificent than any that can be found here, and vast castles surrounded by estates, in comparison with which our finest country residences are insignificant. I have seen the palaces and residences to which I refer—they still bear their owner's name, but he and his family occupy one story, or a portion of a story of the edifice, while one story above him and perhaps two below are let to strangers.—Ask him, as I have done, the cause of the change in the circumstances of his family. He will tell you, that his palace was erected in the better days of Spain, that his landed estates then yielded a very different revenue from the scanty pittance which they now afford—but commerce has quitted the shores of the Peninsula, and the agriculturist is involved with the merchant in one common ruin. I say then, accept the pro-

posal of Government, and a new era opens on our country. We shall send our manufactures to the distant ends of the earth, and our agriculture and commerce will stand on a sure foundation. The Government are now opposed by all who think their monopolies may be affected. They are banded together against the Ministers who have boldly thrown down the gauntlet to them. It may be, that the Government are destined to a defeat. In deciding on this course they cannot have been insensible to its danger. It may lead to present discomfiture—it must terminate in future triumph—and if not in that of their party, it must lead to that which I am convinced they value far more highly, the permanent advantage of the country.

*Mr. Kemble* : Sir, It is not often that I address the House, and it is always with reluctance that I rise to occupy its attention, and when I consider the late period to which this debate has been protracted, that reluctance is not decreased. However, a Lord of the Treasury, the hon. Member for Sheffield, having alluded to a cheer which I gave during the speech of the hon. Gentleman, I cannot avoid addressing a few observations to the House. The cheer which I gave, was when the hon. Member alluded to the condition of the negroes, and contrasted it with that of the working population of this country. Sir, I deplore as much as any man, the distresses of any of our fellow subjects, but I think the observations of the hon. Member would have been more appropriate, at the time when the grant of 20,000,000*l.* for negro emancipation was before the House. Such was the state of our finances, at the time when the Emancipation Act was passed, that although we contracted a loan of 20,000,000*l.* yet the country was not subjected to any additional taxation, and it appears to me, that we are now called upon by her Majesty's Government to undo all that we have done in the great act of emancipating the slave. The hon. Member for Sheffield has alluded to the resolutions agreed to at a meeting of the Anti Slavery Society of Liverpool. I have read those resolutions, in the newspapers of this morning, with the utmost astonishment. I cannot understand how the members of Anti Slavery Societies, can support a measure, which in June last, they said would increase the slave-trade to an

enormous extent. With respect to the revenue that was to be derived from the admission of foreign sugar, whatever revenue was obtained, could only be by displacing to the same extent, sugar the produce of free labour. When on the 25th of June last year, the hon. Member for Wigan, brought forward a motion for an alteration in the sugar duties, nearly the same as that now proposed, he was opposed by the Government, although the price of sugar was nearly 20*s.* per cwt. higher than at present. Two gentlemen of high respectability and great intelligence, largely engaged in the sugar trade, were examined before the Import Committee and one of them states,

"I should think, that to make sugar an article of very general consumption, the price should be from 50*s.* to 60*s.* including the duty. That would be from 5*d.* to 6*d.* per pound. I think the consumption would go on to almost any extent at those prices."

Now, Sir, at the time this evidence was given, the gazette price of sugar was 57*s.* 2*d.* or including the duty 81*s.* 2*d.*, and on Friday last, it was 36*s.* 1*d.*, or including the duty 61*s.* 3*d.* I am therefore surprised, that hon. Members opposite, should now support what they then so strenuously opposed. I am confident, that the good sense of the country will not be with the Government in the support of this measure, I never will believe, that the people, having consented to the great sacrifice involved in the emancipation of the slaves, will now shrink back from the accomplishment of their own measure, and undo all that has been done. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Dundee, has complained that a most unfair character has been given to the propositions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I agree, that an unfair character has been given to them, in considering them measures of free trade. The Government has endeavoured to gain popularity, by bringing forward measures which they say are based upon the principles of free trade. I deny, that this is a question of free trade; the difference of opinion between the parties, is simply, as to the amount of protection. A great deal has been said of the benefit that these measures will confer by opening new markets, but it must be recollected, that there will be a great danger of injuring existing markets. The Government takes great credit to themselves for bringing forward

these measures—the administration of public affairs has been in their hands for a period of nearly eleven years, and why, if convinced of their value, had they not proposed them before? I have heard during this debate a great deal said in praise of Mr. Huskisson, of whose great abilities, there could not be two opinions—but there was one principle, always maintained by that right hon. Gentleman, which seems to have been entirely forgotten, namely, that in a country like this, there ought always to be a surplus of revenue over expenditure of from 3,000,000*l.* to 5,000,000*l.* I ask the House, whether her Majesty's Government have acted upon that principle, or have they not, on the contrary, acted upon a principle of a late President of the Board of Trade, now Governor of Canada, that it was better to allow the money to fructify in the pockets of the people? What, I ask has been the conduct of the Government for the last five years? In 1838, there was a deficiency to the extent of 1,428,534*l.*, and that deficiency had been increased in 1839 and 1840, and on the 5th of April 1841, it amounted to 5,168,079*l.* We have been told that our expenditure will diminish—that the affairs of Canada and China, which had been a cause of increased expenditure were settled; but since that statement was made, we have been officially informed, that the Government not having approved of Captain Elliot's conduct in China, had recalled that gentleman, and appointed another in his place—the China question is therefore anything but settled. Taking all things into consideration, I cannot think that the present is the most proper time for entering upon the discussion of such important commercial alterations as are now proposed. I think that experiments of this kind are always attended with considerable risk. This does not appear to me a favourable opportunity to endeavour to teach the principles of free trade to foreign Powers, when your measures are not introduced, merely from a conviction of the soundness of those principles, but from absolute necessity, in consequence of the state of your finances. I listened with attention to the speech with which the noble Lord opposite opened this debate, and heard with deep regret his description of the wretched state of the operatives of Manchester and Bolton. I recollect when the Duke of Wellington quitted office,

that hon. Gentlemen opposite blamed him and his Friends for the state of affairs then existing. The present Government have been in office for a long time, and now that their period of service is, as I trust, nearly at its close, is this, I ask the result of the policy which they have pursued? Is the result of their administration of public affairs, that deplorable condition of the people which the noble Lord has described? They will doubtless obtain from the country for their conduct, all the credit to which they are entitled, and that I think is no credit at all. It has been stated as a reason for the present condition of our finances, that our establishments have been increased; and that this side of the House has concurred in that increase. True, when we thought that our army and navy required augmentation for the security of the country, we did concur in the increase proposed by the Government, from a desire, that those important branches of the service should be placed on a proper footing with respect to other countries—but I think, that the necessity for that increase was mainly owing to the conduct of the Government. I recollect, that when the Government entered office, a declaration was made in the House of Lords by the noble Lord then Prime Minister, that non-interference would be the principle of his Government with respect to foreign policy. I ask, was there ever a Government which has acted less upon the principle of non-interference? I never can forget the risk to which the peace of Europe has been exposed, by the occurrences that have taken place with respect to the Eastern question—it is said, that that question is finally set at rest. I trust it is so, but I cannot help entertaining some doubts on the subject, for one of its results has been, that for the powerful government of Mehemet Ali, has been substituted the miserable weakness of the Porte. In my opinion the Government are the main cause of the financial difficulties that at present exist, and certainly it does appear to me, that of all periods that can be selected, for bringing forward commercial matters of such importance as the present, a period of financial difficulty is the least favourable. If the Government intended to ground their proceedings on the report of the Import Committee, they ought to have reappointed that Committee, and some Member of the Go-



vernment ought to have taken an active part in it, when any resolutions were adopted—there were never more than six Members and the Chairman present. But the fact is, that some of the most important information given to that Committee was furnished by three gentlemen, Mr. McGregor, Mr. Hume, and Mr. Porter; and it was open to the Government at any time to put themselves in possession of the views of those gentlemen; indeed, they must from official connexion have known them; surely then, if they thought the application of their principles necessary to the prosperity of the commercial interests of the country, they ought to have endeavoured to carry them out at a much earlier period. I trust the House will pause before measures of such importance are passed—measures, some of which although they may possibly succeed, and be productive of good to the country, must in the first instance be the cause of much mischief, much disorder and confusion. At all events, the condition of the country at present, is such as in my opinion, to render this a most unpropitious time for effecting such important changes. Under all the circumstances of the case, I feel it my duty to oppose the measures of her Majesty's Government, and shall vote in favour of the resolution of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool.

*The Chancellor of the Exchequer:* I cannot but regret, that some of the leading members of that political party to which the hon. Gentleman belongs have not been present in the House during the latter part of the speech of the hon. Member for Surrey, for if the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Pembroke, and the noble Lord, the Member for Lancashire, who assisted in the year 1830, in driving from office the Government of the noble Duke, whom they now have joined, if they had been present, they would have made such observations to the hon. Gentleman as would have enabled him to have given a very different description of the state of the country at that period, from that which he has painted: and they would have refreshed the hon. Gentleman's memory with a few particulars which he has wholly omitted. They would have reminded him of the state of the funds, which, I think, a Gentleman so much connected with the city, should have recollected; they would have brought to

his recollection the fact, that the agricultural districts were in such a state of excitement that no man could sleep in quiet, that there were nightly burnings—they would have reminded him that at that time the King of England was not enabled to pass through his own city of London to dine with the Lord Mayor—and with respect to foreign affairs, to which the hon. Gentleman has also alluded in his speech, they might possibly have caused him to recollect, that a noble relative of my own (Lord Ashburton), in 1830 stated, that foreign affairs were in such a condition, that he defied my noble Friend (Viscount Palmerston), to maintain peace for six weeks. If the hon. Gentleman's information upon the sugar trade were as correct as his recollection of political circumstances, I am afraid, that the House will not place upon him that reliance which from his position, and from his connection with persons interested in the sugar trade, they would be disposed to do. It is, however, strange, that the hon. Gentleman, with opportunities of acquiring information as great as any man in the House, should have touched most lightly upon that which was the peculiar subject of the present motion. He has descanted largely upon slavery and the slave-trade, but when he came to the question of the sugar duties he has handled the matter most gingerly, and quietly slipped into the general question of finance. I will not follow the hon. Gentleman into the amount of the 3,000,000*l.* or the 5,000,000*l.* surplus, which Mr. Huskisson thought a country like this ought always to have. That, I fear, is one of the beautiful dreams in which financiers sometimes indulge; but if the hon. Gentleman will look back into figures and history, he will find, that such a surplus has never been continued by any Government. In the few observations, however, which the hon. Gentleman has made with respect to the sugar duties, although he has most lightly touched upon that branch of the question, he has fallen into the very same inconsistencies of argument into which, in listening to hon. Gentlemen opposite, the House will have observed, that they all have fallen. In the first place, hon. Gentlemen say, that I greatly overrate the amount I shall receive. They tell me, that I rely upon foreign sugar for my income; they say, that I should not be able to get foreign sugar;

they assert, that the West Indians would be able to sell sugar at so cheap a rate, that no foreign sugar would come in, and they tell me that my scheme is a bubble, and assert roundly that I shall not obtain the proposed amount of income; and yet hardly are these assertions out of their mouths, than they turn round and tell me, that my proposal would produce such a deluge of foreign sugar, that such quantities of foreign sugar would come in, that the negro population in the West Indies will be thrown out of employment, that the West-Indian employers will be ruined, and that even the rich valley of the Ganges will be swamped. It would have been very desirable if hon. Gentlemen opposite, when they agreed to oppose this motion, had met to arrange their line of argument; they should have settled beforehand whether I shall not be able to get my revenue, or whether I shall ruin the West-India interest; but the two assertions were utterly incompatible. If I can ruin the West-India interest, at least, I must get foreign sugar to provide my income. But, Sir, I feel satisfied, that the proposed amount of income may be secured, and a proper protection be still given to the West-Indian interest. My noble Friend near me (Lord John Russell) has stated the mode in which the sugar duties have been arranged. I must trouble the House again by re-stating the figures, and think I shall be able to satisfy the House not only that ample protection will be given to the West-Indian interest, but that I shall secure the amount of revenue which I anticipated. When her Majesty's Government had satisfied themselves, that the proper course to meet the financial difficulties of the country was by taking a more enlarged view of the interests of trade and of commerce, by dealing with the great monopolies, by opening new markets for our manufactures, and giving a fresh impulse to the energies of the country, and not by laying new taxes upon a people already sufficiently burthened, it became their duty to consider what amount of reduction might be made, with a due attention to the West-Indian interests. The duty at present levied upon foreign sugar is 3*l.* 3*s.* per cwt. plus the five per cent. duty; it stands in the resolution which is printed at 36*s.*, which, with the five per cent. would amount to 37*s.* 9*d.* and a fraction. Now, if I take the price of foreign muscovado sugar as

it was stated by my noble Friend, viz., 23*s.*, or at 21*s.* 6*d.*, as it was according to the last return, the price with the duty added, would amount to 59*s.* 3*d.* or 60*s.* 9*d.* I am inclined to take the higher of these sums, for the moment foreign sugar is allowed to enter into the British market, the price will naturally rise, and British colonial sugar was always higher in price than foreign sugar. Is not this price a sufficient protection to the West-India interests? They are secured this protection, a protection of fifty per cent. Surely, this was a fair and reasonable protection to the West Indies? If hon. Gentlemen will look to the papers which have been laid on the Table of the House, and which are printed, and if they will take from the year 1820, up to which high prices continued, down to the year 1839, they will find that the price of colonial sugar in the British market has never exceeded 37*s.*, except in the year 1825, which was a year of very high prices, and in the year 1836, when it reached 40*s.* 3*d.* In the last two years, I admit, the price was much higher, it was in fact excessive. The House, therefore, will see, that the price, which by the present measure will be secured to the British colonies, has been only exceeded twice in the course of near twenty years. I have been taunted, and, I am bound to say, not without reason, with the amount of this protection. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, who spoke the other night, said, that sugar had become one of the necessaries of life, and that if there were any principle of free trade, it was, that the duties upon such a class of articles should be lowered. I admit the truth of that doctrine, but I am bound to say, that the object of the Government, amidst other considerations, has been, to afford ample security to the West-Indian interests at the time, and under the circumstances in which they were now placed. I must, however, remark, that this protection is not entirely all the advantage which the West-Indian interests have obtained. My right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade, has introduced a bill in the present Session, for giving certain assistance to the West Indies. In the year 1832, a committee sat upon the state of the West Indies, and long calculations were made before the committee by the West-Indian proprietors, showing that the restrictions

imposed upon their trade and commerce, made a heavy additional tax or duty, and it was stated, that the tax they paid in consequence of these restrictions upon their commerce and trade was equivalent to a further duty of 5s. 6d. the cwt. I do not wish to bind the West-Indian interests to that exact calculation, because I know that, when giving evidence before committees, parties are apt to somewhat overstate their case. I must observe, that my right hon. Friend has brought in a bill, which does not entirely remove all these restrictions, yet which reduces the 5s. 6d., and it must not be lost sight of, that when the present measure was brought forward, my right hon. Friend and the Government have proposed some reduction of the charges to which West-India produce has been long subject. I have been told in the course of this debate that I shall not obtain the money which I expect from the proposed alteration, and I am asked what are those calculations on which I ground my assurance that, by this measure the revenue upon sugar will next year, and in every future year, increase by the sum of 700,000*l*. Now, hon. Gentlemen will observe, that the manner in which I deal with this question is, to fix a certain amount of price, beyond which sugar should not rise. So long, therefore, as colonial sugar can be sold at a certain price, foreign sugar will not come into use; but the moment colonial sugar rises above that price, foreign sugar will enter the market. The question, therefore, is, on what quantity of sugar I can rely? If hon. Gentlemen will again turn to the table to which I have already referred, they will find, that in the year 1825, the price of sugar was 38s. 6d., and the quantity imported for home consumption was 3,079,848 cwt. In 1826, the price fell to 30s. 7d., and there was a considerable increase in the quantity imported—490,000 cwt. In 1836, again, the price was 40s. 10d. and the amount imported for home consumption was 3,308,000 cwt.; but in 1837, when there was a fall in the price to 34s. 8d., or 6s. 2d., the consumption of sugar at home increased by the quantity of 486,000 cwt. over what it had been in the preceding year. The prices last year and the year before were above 39s. and 40s., and the price I now propose to secure and calculate upon was 36s., being a fall from last year not of 5s. or 6s. or 8s. but to a much greater extent.

There can, therefore, be no doubt that I may calculate upon a much greater consumption next year, and the revenue will in proportion increase. Looking to the price of last year, and the proposed price, I estimate upon an increased consumption of 523,000 cwt. of sugar; now, if I take that increased consumption, the additional revenue to be derived from these duties would be 660,000*l*., and to raise that amount, every ounce that would be consumed would be British colonial sugar, which would come in under the lowest rate of duty. There is not one ounce of the foreign sugar that would pay the higher rate in this estimate. Now in this is not included the duty upon another article, molasses; on which, as I formerly stated, the duty has last year fallen off 40,000*l*.. Taking, therefore, the duty on molasses the same as in 1839, it would make up the 700,000*l*.. Thus, without calculating for any increase upon foreign sugar or on molasses, I do not doubt that if we can secure a low price of sugar, because all depends upon that, we may rely upon an increase next year of 700,000*l*. in the revenue. I have no hesitation, however, in declaring, that in putting the increase at that amount, I believe I have understated it. I have in my hand a paper which has been drawn up, and will, I think, satisfy the House how great the increase will be. It takes the consumption per head of former years, and shews what the increase will be with the population of 1841 and the five per cent. In the year 1830, the consumption of sugar was 19·94lbs per head; and taking the population of 1841, and supposing that there was the same rate of consumption per head, instead of receiving an additional revenue of 700,000*l*., I shall have an increase in the revenue of 1,606,000*l*.. This is at the low duty of 24s. In the year 1831, the consumption, per head, had been at the rate of 20·11; and taking the calculation in accordance with this amount, I find that I shall acquire a revenue amounting to 1,659,000*l*.; in 1832, the consumption was at the rate of 19lbs. per head, and the revenue at that rate would produce 1,310,000*l*.; in 1833, it was 17·99, which would yield 993,000*l*.; taking the calculation in accordance with the consumption of 1834, the produce would be one million and a fraction; taking it at the amount consumed in 1836, it would yield 549,000*l*., and that was the

year in which the consumption had been the lowest; taking it at that consumed in 1837, it would yield 1,115,000*l.*; at that consumed in 1838, it would yield 1,128,000*l.*; and at that consumed in 1839, it would yield 721,000*l.* Therefore, if Gentlemen take the consumption of any one year, except 1836, as affording a means of exhibiting the probable future consumption, they will find that I shall receive a sum much larger than that on which I had based my calculation; and I must observe, that during the last two years, not only have the stocks of the grocers materially diminished, but the people of this country have been compelled either to give up sugar altogether, or to do what was almost equally injurious to the revenue, namely, to use an adulterated article. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last has borne high testimony to the character of two of the witnesses who were examined before the committee upon the import duties, and I am glad that he has done so, because it prevents the necessity of my saying anything further upon that subject. What did those Gentlemen state? They stated, that the moment their sugar rose above 60*s.*, that moment the consumption began to fall off, but that if they could keep it between 56*s.* and 60*s.* they might look for an almost unlimited consumption; and the hon. Member for Newark, in the observations which he had made, has expressed the same opinion. [*Cheers.*] I well know what that cheer means, for the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Cambridge, would say, "Let the sugar alone; I do not quarrel with you about your 700,000*l.*; you will get more than that." The right hon. Gentleman admits, that I shall get the money. It is admitted, then, that the revenue would be 700,000*l.*; but if that is the case, what becomes of all the taunts which I have heard? of the observations of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire? and of those hon. Gentlemen who have told me that I should not get the money? what becomes of all their denunciations of my proposal as a financial bubble? Surely a bubble which brings 700,000*l.* to begin with, would not have been unworthy the attention of the first merchant of the city of London in the good old times. But I am told that there is a complete answer to my proposition. It is said, "You will get the money, but not on foreign sugar; you will get it from

the home market—the home market will be able to supply you; you are sure of your money, and therefore you should let it alone." This language shews me that Gentlemen are not aware of the views of the Government. My object never was to ruin the West-Indian merchants, or to prevent them from having fair prices. The protection was fixed to give fair and reasonable prices to the party protected, and so long as he was content, and was able fairly to sell his produce within the price fixed, he is protected by the duty imposed. The moment he goes beyond that price, the foreign sugar will come into the market; while then I fix a fair price for West-Indian produce, I take a security on the part of the public, that they shall not be again subjected to the inconveniences which they have already suffered by reason of the high rates at which the commodity has been sold. The right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge had entered into a calculation as to produce, and asked the House to place entire reliance on it. Now, in the first place I told the House that the quantity of sugar likely to be produced and imported from the British colonies, and the East Indies, would be amply sufficient to supply the consumption. The right hon. Gentleman estimated what he considered sufficient for the consumption; but I shall prefer to leave it to the consumers of this country to judge for themselves what is the amount which they require for their consumption. The whole object and principle of this measure has been to fix the price at such a fair and reasonable amount that the consumption shall go on without any limit but that afforded by the capabilities and wishes of the public and the consumers. But even if it were a matter of calculation, I may be permitted to doubt how far his calculations can be relied on. In those which are before the House, there is a difference of 30,000 tons, being more than the increase on which I calculate. But if I were to search the records of the office of my noble Friend, the Secretary for the Colonies, I believe I shall be able to find repeated remonstrances, and those too, of a very late date, from some of the very colonies which, it is now said, are able to give this country good and ample supplies of sugar, in which the produce is declared to have fallen off. Now it was stated, that the supply was ample. But these colonies

must not blow hot and cold. They must not, when they fear the results of any new regulation, complain that it will ruin them, because their crops are decreasing; and then come forward and declare that they shall be able to meet the consumption with a sufficient supply. But this is not all. I have had the honour of receiving information upon this subject from the trade; I have received a most respectable deputation from the gentlemen connected with the East Indies. Their statements by no means corroborated the declarations of the right hon. Gentleman. There are hon. Members who can contradict what I say, if I misrepresent what occurred. I asked the deputation what was the amount of price at which they considered that they could export sugar with a fair remunerating return to them? and they said, "we will not deceive you; we will not give you an exaggerated statement, but if you look to us, 40s. must be our price." But if gentlemen came to me with that statement, I must answer, that that was an enormous price to pay, and if that is my opinion, I shall do my work exceedingly ill—nay, I must be a madman, if I trust to the promise of hon. Gentlemen who argue on the other side of the House, and take no other security for a supply being guaranteed to the public, always remembering that this security is a mere waste of words, if what the House was told is true. If there is a considerable surplus in the supply from our own colonies, as the House is promised, no foreign sugar can ever find its way into the market at all, and no harm can be done; but when uncertainty exists, I am bound to take such a security that the interests of the people shall not suffer. When this point was argued the other evening, hon. Gentleman had referred triumphantly to the prices current, and had told the House "since the very time when this measure was introduced, prices have actually fallen below the limit proposed." Will hon. Gentlemen stand upon the prices current now: Are prices continuing to fall? The moment that parties connected with the trade saw what was going on in the House and the probable result of the proposal, prices rose. Hon. Gentlemen have told me, that last year prices were high, and, that then was the time when this measure should have been introduced. But if I had acted upon this principle, did the House suppose, that I should not have

been answered, and most properly too, "do not make this change now; this is not a proper time; but when prices are more equal, then you may venture upon it, but do not take such a step at this inconvenient period." I have proposed this measure, I admit, at a time when the amount of the produce is great; I have proposed it when I may be taunted that the immediate reduction would be comparatively small; but I have proposed it at a time when it will interfere the least inconveniently with the West-Indian interests. If West-Indian interests were safe this year—if from the large produce the increase will have little effect for this year, it will act as a notice for the future. If it is true that this law will be mere waste paper for one year, the only result is, that it has been proposed and adopted with that cautious discretion consistent with a careful attention to their interests, and they have no right to complain of such a course being taken. While I am dealing with the question of protection, I beg to call the attention of the House to a point which has been referred to by other hon. Gentlemen, and to which, I must say, that no satisfactory answer has been given, and to which it is necessary that hon. Gentlemen opposite should be called upon to afford some explanation. In 1829, Mr. Charles Grant, now Lord Glenelg, brought forward a proposal respecting sugar duties. He stated, that Mr. Huskisson, when President of the Board of Trade, had pledged himself to re-consider the sugar duties; that Mr. Huskisson had left office, and that he had succeeded him; that he considered himself bound by that pledge which had been given by his predecessor; that he had given his best attention to the question; that in concurrence with Mr. Huskisson he had laid before the Cabinet to which he belonged a certain scale of duties. He said, that after many suggestions having been made to him, and after many discussions with all parties, he had at last submitted to his colleagues a plan which involved a reduction of duties, a plan which they had favourably received, but it had been postponed on the ground of revenue. That such was the case, had been stated twice in the course of debate, and it had never been denied; so far from it, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day declared, that the difference between him and the right hon. Gentleman was not a difference

of principle. What was the scale of duties then proposed? Upon British plantation sugar a duty of 20s., upon East-India sugar a duty of 25s., and upon foreign sugar a duty of 28s. only. That was not quite 50 per cent—8s. upon 20s. Now, I know the answer that will be made to this, because an answer has been attempted on a former night. It will be said, as the hon. Member for Newark has said, that that occurred before the experiment of the abolition of slavery. At that time, however, the discussions upon the question of slavery and the slave-trade were going on. But what were the duties imposed? 20s. upon West-India sugar—sugar which was then cultivated by slave-labour; and 25s. upon East-Indian sugar, the produce of free labour. I do not quarrel with these duties; at that time, the opinions respecting East-India sugar were not so general as they were afterwards; but what was the difference made between free labour sugar and the sugar of Brazil and Cuba? An additional protection of 3s. only was given to the free sugar labour of the East Indies, in comparison with that which was the produce of slave-labour in Cuba and the Brazils. I do not quarrel with you for changing your opinion as to the amount of protection, but I must ask the House this question: How could those who were consenting parties to this proposal be prepared to condemn the introduction of the sugar of Cuba and the Brazils altogether? I propose a protection of 50s. per cent. and yet these very parties, who themselves admitted a protective duty of 3s. only, now declare, that by the proposition, slavery will be encouraged, and would endeavour, by raising those very arguments which they had before opposed, to ride into power on the anti-slavery cry. Hon. Gentlemen may be sure, that the people of England take considerable interest in this matter, and they may be assured, that they will ask the question how it came, that those who had been prepared to admit Brazilian and Cuba sugar, with only 3s. protection over free labour sugar, when they were in power, should have forgotten those views which they had before advocated, and have adopted others entirely inconsistent with the principles upon which they had formerly acted. But there is another answer which may be given. The hon. Member for Newark had said, that it was then a question of price—a mere nominal

thing; and, that the produce was large, and no effect will be produced. But, if there is a surplus of produce now, above the wants of the consumer, as is stated, the two cases are the same. With regard to its being a matter of slight importance in the year 1829, it was not so considered by Mr. Huskisson; Mr. Huskisson argued the question with his usual ability, and anticipated great benefits from its adoption. Mr. Fowell Buxton raised the same ground of objection which is now raised, nor was the question of slavery and the slave-trade omitted. He said, that he was afraid, that by the proposition which was made, the House was going to encourage the continuance of the system of the slave-trade. Mr. Grant, in his speech, alluded to and answered this objection. Mr. Grant was aware of the objection; he must have brought it before his colleagues; but, at that time, it was not considered of much weight, though now it is so paramount, that hon. Gentlemen opposite are prepared to make it the standard under which they would do battle on this great question. Does the hon. Gentleman mean to say, that he never considered this objection—that he had not taken those things into consideration? But if he did, how does it happen that his virtue was then at 3s., and that he now objects to any importation of foreign sugar. [Mr. Goulburn said, that he had not assented to this proposition.] The statement to which I refer has been made twice in the House, and no Member of the Cabinet ventured to contradict it, and I am unable, therefore, to comprehend the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman's observation. Mr. Grant made it in the presence of Mr. Huskisson and the Gentlemen opposite; if incorrect, it should have then been set right. It was clear also that much attention had been given to the question by the then Cabinet. It was remarkable that Mr. Grant stated, that an objection had been raised on financial grounds, but that his opinion was so strong, that though he yielded to the financial grounds of objection taken by the cabinet, he reserved to himself the right of stating to the House of Commons the arrangement which he had proposed. I now turn to my right hon. Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets; I trust my right hon. Friend, is convinced of the sincere respect I entertain for him, and hope that no words which I might use in

reference to him will belie my feeling. I can assure my right hon. Friend I am fully persuaded of the honesty of the opinions which he has advanced, and of the pain with which he has felt himself compelled to take the course which he has taken. But I confess that I entirely differ with my right hon. Friend, as to the effect that would follow from the introduction of foreign sugar. My object is, that there should be a sound and fair competition between the free labour sugar of the East and West Indies, and the sugar that was the product of foreign labour. It is my sincere and honest belief, that if it is wished to strengthen and promote the growth of free labour sugar, we can only do so by recurring to those principles which were true in every matter of trade, and that the only means of having a healthy, steady, fair, and strong produce of free labour sugar, is, by allowing competition with other sugar, and not by bolstering it up with protective duties. I will beg to refer my right hon. Friend to those principles which he has advanced on other occasions, when not misled by the better feelings of his nature; and if he will bear these principles in mind, then he must concur with me, that, looking back to the history of our commercial policy, there was nothing more true than the principle of Mr. Huskisson, that if you wished to improve trade you must admit some principle of competition; and that the worst possible thing that you could do, and that which would inflict the greatest possible injury on commerce, was to bolster and cocker it up, in order to prevent any other party from competing. I must appeal to my right hon. Friend, to say why, when he is prepared to prohibit slave-grown sugar, he does not object to the introduction of coffee and tobacco. The only possible answer is that which has been given by my right hon. Friend, when he says, that he is a practical man, and he got what he could—that he was against slavery, but as he could not get all he wished, he would be content with what he could get. But although the right hon. Gentleman is able to satisfy his own mind, and that of many of his friends, how will he deal with foreign powers? If he said to the Brazils, “admit my cottons,” their answer would be, “admit our sugar;” and if he said, “I object to take produce which is the growth of slave-labour,” the answer direct-

ly would be, “where do you get your cotton?” Would it be satisfactory for my right hon. Friend to reply, “I am a practical man, I get what I can, I know I cannot prevent the importation of cotton, but I will do my utmost to prevent the importation of sugar.” Such an argument may be all very well from my right hon. Friend, but if put into the mouth of the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, I fear it will only expose this country to the ridicule and contempt of foreign nations. But the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, has challenged me to prove, that, in the consumption of Brazil produce, we are encouraging slave-labour, and has defied him to show that, by continuing the present trade, we are encouraging it. Does the noble Lord mean to argue that, if we send whatever amount of exports to Brazil or Cuba, and they are paid for, not immediately in the produce of those mines to which the hon. Member for Antrim has referred, but by the produce of the sugar sold elsewhere, the effect is not precisely the same as if the sugar is sent to England? If the sugar produced by slave-labour is sold to other countries, and, with the money produced our exports are paid for, is not that precisely in effect the same as a direct encouragement to slavery? It reminds me of what we have all read in our childhood, the story of the cherry orchard of Miss Edgworth, Some children are tempted with the sight of some cherries which are brought to their home to sell; anxious to obtain them, they set to work plaiting straw, which they sell to a third party, and with the produce buy the cherries. So, if you send your cherries to the Brazils, you excite the desire there to purchase them, and if you refuse to take their sugar in exchange, they will send it to foreign markets, and so obtain the means of paying you for your cherries. Those were the principles and the reasonings of Mr. Huskisson; they are the principles of common sense, though I admit that they are not those of the noble Lord. The noble Lord, however, particularly referred to refined sugar. Now, you take a certain quantity of sugar from abroad, which you refine in this country, and you export it to the West Indies. Does the noble Lord mean to say, that this was not an encouragement to slave-labour! Yet this is the doctrine laid down with considerable emphasis last evening by the no-

ble Lord opposite, who appeared before the House as a disciple of Mr. Huskisson, who expounded what free trade was, and what it was not; and certainly announced some propositions which excited in me some astonishment. If the West Indies send all their produce to England, and if in lieu of using their own sugar they buy refined sugar, the produce of Cuba, does the noble Lord mean to say, that the effect is not the same as if a similar amount of slave-grown sugar were allowed to be admitted into England direct! Even as to the refined sugar, which was exported to Hamburg and Amsterdam, I cannot but consider that the application of English capital, and the facilities and cheaper fuel of our refiners, has the tendency to reduce the price—that reducing the price in the foreign market increases the consumption and so far has a tendency to increase the produce, and according to the notions of hon. Gentlemen opposite, to encourage slavery and the slave-trade. I have been challenged to deal with these points, and, therefore, I have troubled the House on the subject. I should hardly have supposed it necessary, but the noble Lord came forward as the pupil of Mr. Huskisson; he stated his pride in his master, but if by any possibility Mr. Huskisson could now look down upon those who called themselves his pupils, he would not feel very proud of them. To the one other point I must address myself, because it is immediately connected with my own particular department. I have been taunted with having now introduced a budget, founded on a principle different from that of last year. My hon. Friends appear to have laboured under some difficulty in defending me from this imputation, but I must say, that as I do not consider myself fairly open to the accusation, so also I am not wholly entitled to the ground of defence that has been set up for me. When considering the financial state of the country last year, I was not able to conceal from myself that, independent of the financial difficulty of raising an additional revenue, we had also to look to another great consideration, which was, the very strong feeling which I believed existed, both at home and in foreign countries, that no ministry could exist in the country, and that no reformed House would consent to lay direct taxation on the people. This opinion existed to a very great extent, not merely among hon.

Gentlemen opposite, but also among many of my own political friends. It appeared to me of the utmost importance that both friends as well as enemies should learn that whatever party might be in power—whatever might be the change in the representative system, there existed in the country a determination to find resources to keep up the public faith, and to protect the honour and the interests of the country, and I, therefore, not so much as a financier, as with a view to the real general interests of England, resolved at once to bring forward a proposition that should be in the nature of direct taxation, in order that what would be the most serious calamity might not attach to the country. It was all very well to attack the motives or the policy of that course now; but what was the result? The vessel had answered the helm, and no Minister need again fear that the country will not answer the appeal now frankly and necessarily made to it; but when I came a second time to consider the subject—when I found that I was again called upon to have recourse to the country to raise additional means, in order to meet the public expenditure, relieved as I then was from the weighty considerations which had pressed upon me on the former occasion, in conjunction with my Colleagues, I resolved upon the course which I have since recommended to the House. I was not unprepared for the opposition which I was to meet. But while hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite attack the proposition of the Government, they neglect to offer any other in lieu of it. Indeed, it is impossible exactly to find out what their opinions really are. It is admitted on all hands, even by themselves, that a great commercial crisis has arrived—that it is the duty, not only of the Government, but of the House also, to provide some mode by which to meet that difficulty. I have ventured to propose a means by which the deficient revenue can be raised—which avoids imposing additional burthens on the over-taxed people of this country. I have proposed the adoption of a scheme which does not exclusively pay attention to the interests and rights of particular classes, but points to the general interests of the community. That scheme has been opposed by an immediate junction of interests, but I am surely entitled to ask, if I am wrong, and if my proposi-



tion is not adopted, what course are you prepared to pursue in lieu of it? I can very well see, from the course which the debate has taken up to this time, that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite will shrink from giving an answer to this question. But this has not been the course in other times. When Mr. Huskisson was in the House, though not in the Ministry, and he disapproved of the financial measures of the then existing ministry, he had the manliness and straightforwardness to state, not indeed the particular measures which he would be prepared to propose, but the general line of commercial policy which he thought ought to be pursued. When Lord Spencer, in a small and at that time hopeless minority, opposed the Government of the day on the financial measures, he stated the course which he would be prepared to pursue, and there was no shrinking or concealment in him. When my noble relation, Lord Ashburton, year after year made his comments on the financial affairs of the country he stated, to do him justice, boldly and openly his opinions. But the question of the Budget has now been a week under discussion. There exists in this House a great party who opposes it; yet I defy any one, whether friend or foe, to tell what the principles of the opposite party are on this subject. I defy them to show, from their speeches, what their opinions are. They have carefully avoided the general subject. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Stamford, indeed, did enter largely into the finances of the country, and talked a great deal about them—probably looking to some position which he was to hold in the embryo government. For one whole hour he talked, mingling together the Sugar Duties, the Corn-laws, and the Post-office, and disturbing causes, and moral friction; yet, during the whole hour in which it was my misfortune to hear him, such was the ingenuity with which he compounded his address, that no one decided view or opinion could be gleaned from it. If in one sentence you thought you had caught a glimpse of meaning, in the next he left a loop-hole out of which he could slip. And so with all the hon. Gentlemen opposite who had spoken on the subject. I can well understand how these tactics suit hon. Gentlemen opposite, for the purpose of keeping united the power-

ful party that are now opposed to these propositions. This policy of concealment has so far succeeded that no hon. Member can possibly tell what will be their course if they were to come into office. It left them the opportunity of hereafter adopting any course which might seem fit. But this course was not the old course of proceeding, and I do not believe it will answer, in the long run, with the people of England. The mode in which it has been usual to carry on the public service has been for both parties to lay their principles before the country, and leave the country to approve of the one set of principles or the other. I have been taunted by the hon. Gentleman opposite with being a plain-spoken man. Whether that was intended as a sneer or a compliment, I cannot return it in either sense. I ask from hon. Gentlemen opposite not that kind of information which was wrung from me last year, to the inconvenience of the public service—not particular details, but the general course which they are prepared to adopt. It is the duty of the House to provide for the public service, and I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite in what mode they would perform that duty. I do not call on them to specify the actual taxes they would propose, but the general course of policy. Are they prepared to have recourse to additional direct taxation to make up the public revenue if they reject my motion? I have proposed to raise the means for the public service without laying additional burthens on the people of this country—if you oppose me, are you prepared to assert a further taxation. I propose to open new markets to the industry and trade of the country—if you oppose me, are you prepared to lay down principles which will for ever take away all hopes for the manufacturing interest. I propose to open the doors to commercial intercourse with foreign countries, and to bind them to us by ties of mutual interest and advantage, stronger than all the ties which my noble Friend can create by the parchment and seals of treaties. If you oppose me, will you tell foreign powers, that you will insist on their receiving your goods, but theirs you will not receive. Upon what principles are you prepared to ride into office? I feel sure—I see I shall get no answer. The right hon. Baronet will, as usual, make an able and intelligent speech, but he is never more able than when he avoids ex-

pressing his opinions. Even the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, who could not be accused of showing any of the peculiar caution of the right hon. Baronet, had not advanced one single proposition, or, if he had done so in the one sentence, had taken especial care to withdraw or neutralize it in the next. However this may be, I feel perfectly confident that all these propositions and principles must, at a future and no distant period, govern the financial system of this country. I am not ashamed, I do not for a moment regret that I have laid these propositions openly and at once before the country for its adoption, and whether the country shall be of opinion that those who had brought forward these propositions should carry them into execution, or whether, on the contrary, the country should think that the execution of them ought to pass into other hands—whether you will follow the course which we have proposed, or prefer the policy, the honest, noble, and generous policy pointed out by the hon. Member for Kilmarnock, not attacking these questions of monopoly in a body, but attacking them one by one; whether I shall contrive to carry them, or whether, sitting on the opposite benches, I shall have to support these measures one by one, and to hear the taunts addressed to those who, having collected and blended together these single interests, to give battle to a Government to which they were opposed, would, when they had used them, fling them aside one by one, was to him a matter of comparative indifference.

Debate again adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, May 17, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a third time:—Exchequer Bills; Excise Collection and Management; Banking Copartnerships.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of Devonshire, from Bath, for the Ministerial proposition for the Reduction of the Duties on Corn, Timber, and Sugar.—By the Marquess of Westminster, from Shiffnal, for an Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By the Marquess of Exeter, and the Duke of Rutland, from Leicester and Lincolnshire, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Rendale, from Sloane-street, Chelsea, for the Abolition of the Tolls on the Bridges.—By the Earl of Mountcashel, from the Colonial Association, against any Alteration in the Timber Duties.

CORN-LAWS.] The Duke of Rutland presented three petitions from Leicester, against any alteration in the Corn-laws.

Earl Fitzwilliam was desirous of speaking, and particularly of speaking on those petitions, because, in the first place, no person had a greater right to be heard on this subject than the noble Duke, from his knowledge of it; and the noble Duke had a still further title to their Lordships' consideration in consequence of the unvarying, sedulous, and watchful attention which he had ever paid to the interests of those with whom the noble Duke was immediately connected. That was one reason why he wished to address their Lordships at that moment. But a second reason was to be found in the expression quoted by the noble Duke as contained in one of those petitions. The expression was to this effect—that the petitioners prayed their Lordships to make no alteration in the laws which now regulate the importation of foreign corn. It was to this point that he was particularly desirous of drawing their Lordships' attention as extensive landowners, and also, of course, as legislators. He confessed, that he had heard with great astonishment the paragraph which he had just quoted. It surprised him very much, that persons, not perhaps identically the same, but standing in the same situation as the petitioners, should have, within a very few years, come before their Lordships with petitions of a completely contrary nature and description. On the occasion to which he referred, he found the owners and occupiers of land earnestly praying, that an alteration might be made in the Corn-laws. They spoke of the great distress to which they were subjected, and they besought their Lordships to take their case into immediate consideration. It was most remarkable, that the same persons who, five years ago, called on their Lordships to take their case into consideration, with a view to an alteration of the Corn-laws, should now come forward praying their Lordships to make no alteration in those laws. In 1835, it was remarkable that they required alteration, while in 1841 they loudly expressed their opposition to any alteration. The reason was, not that they disliked the law (in 1835), or that they particularly liked the law now. No, it was because they disliked the low price in 1835, and they liked the present high price. They were greatly alarmed at an average of 39s. per quarter for wheat; but they clearly saw, and wished to maintain, the advantage of an average of 70s per quarter. The great mass of the people were contented with

the prices of 1834, 1835, and 1836. An immense rise had since occurred, and they now came forward to complain of those high prices, which the petitioners wished to be continued. In the meantime, it was proper for their Lordships to consider what effect the duties on corn produced with reference to our foreign trade. They must admit, that the present state of the commerce of this country required their most serious consideration; but whether the distress that existed was to be ascribed to Corn-laws alone was another question. It would be most unphilosophical to ascribe to an individual cause a state of things that might be ascribed to many causes; but when such effects were generally attributed to the Corn-laws, it would be but fair, at least, to institute an inquiry into the subject. The exports of the country presented some circumstances of a very remarkable character. It was well known, that the exportation of what were denominated our perfect manufactures (except to our own colonies) had been very much diminished, while the exportation of what might be described as our imperfect manufactures had considerably increased, these latter branches of export being afterwards perfectly manufactured by foreign states. If this were the case, as no doubt it was, it became still more the duty of their Lordships to take care that no act of theirs gave an additional impulse to the growth of those foreign manufactures. The situation of our manufacturing population could not be contemplated without serious alarm; and, if their Lordships were not disposed to adopt the measure, with respect to the Corn-laws proposed to the House of Commons, they surely ought not to resist the appointment of a committee, to inquire into what were the real causes which produced the present state of the manufacturing population. The prosperity of the agricultural interest must necessarily depend, in a very great measure, on the prosperity of the manufacturing interest, and anything that diminished the expenditure, and consequently the enjoyments of the latter, must, without doubt, have a pernicious effect on the interests of the landed proprietors. What effect, then, did the duties on corn produce? A very curious statement had been put into his hands by a gentleman connected with a manufacturing town in Lancashire. That gentleman stated, that the workmen employed by him had expended upon agricultural produce, in the year 1835, the sum of 12,000*l.*

while in the last year they had expended 18,000*l.* Now, it might be said, that in the mean time the agriculturists got the benefit of the increase of price; but was it to be expected, that the manufacturing workman could go on expending at that rate? There was a most erroneous idea prevalent, that a rise in the price of the necessities of life would necessarily be accompanied by a rise in wages. The general and natural effect of a rise in the price of provisions, so far from leading to an increase of wages, had a contrary tendency; so much so, that in 1835 the manufacturers' wages were raised, whereas in 1840 they were diminished. A rise in the price of provisions necessarily increased the expenditure of the working classes, but it was not met on the part of the employers by a rise of wages. Taking long periods in the history of the country—centuries, for instance—no doubt, as the price of provisions gradually rose, there was also a rise in wages beyond the rate of the previous century. But this was a very different proposition from the statement that a temporary rise in the price of provisions was also accompanied by a corresponding rise in the rate of wages. On the contrary, such temporary rise in the price of provisions only tended to cramp the resources of the operative classes of society?

Lord *Kenyon*: Does the noble Lord mean to apply his argument to the state of wages in the agricultural districts?

Earl *Fitzwilliam* undoubtedly intended to apply it generally.

Lord *Kenyon*: I did not intend to interrupt the noble Earl, but I wished to have the remark distinctly understood. I must say that it is quite contrary to all my experience.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* was glad to hear it; but he was afraid that his remark applied as well to the agricultural, as to the manufacturing classes. When the price of corn had risen two or three years ago, there had been no rise in wages. [*Oh, oh.*] Well, then, if his statements were doubted why did they not appoint a committee and institute an inquiry? He certainly had known some places where wages had been raised, but he also knew many others where this had not been the case. This was a principal cause of the clamour raised against their Lordships, and the reason why he objected to the present system was, that it placed them in a position which he did not like to see them occupy. But supposing that the experience of the noble Lord ap-

plied to all classes and all places, and that a rise of wages followed a rise of provisions, would it enable the manufacturers of this country to meet on an equal footing foreign manufacturers in foreign markets. The increase of wages must necessarily produce an exactly opposite effect. The foreign manufacturers had, and always would have, great advantages, but their Lordships ought not to increase their advantages by unwise legislation. It had been said, that the exports of our manufactures had increased, but, as he had already said, it was only an increase of the articles of imperfect manufacture. All woollen articles had diminished in exportation to foreign countries (though not to our own colonies, for in our colonies we had a monopoly). Of cotton and woollen yarns the exportation had increased, but when these yarns had been converted into cloths then the exportation had diminished. These were facts well worthy of their Lordships' attention. He would not on the present occasion enter more fully into the important and complicated subject of our commercial embarrassments, or of the effects which the existing Corn-laws had produced in relation to them, but would at once conclude with calling their attention to the subject, and presenting a great number of petitions with which he had been intrusted respecting it.

The Earl of Ripon assured their Lordships, that he did not intend to enter upon the discussion of the Corn-laws, which he thought too large a question to be debated incidentally; but he wished to refer to the state and condition of our export trade, which had been represented as progressively declining. The noble Earl was too philosophical to ascribe all the evils of the country to the Corn-laws, but he (Lord Ripon) thought he had both seen and heard them attributed to that source. But were the allegations about the progressive diminution of our trade consistent with the fact? He took the fact to be exactly the reverse, not only in reference to the general export trade of the country, but also in reference to those very countries which were most especially concerned in this question of the Corn-laws. He would point out one or two matters, which he trusted the noble Earl would take into consideration before this subject was again discussed. An account had been moved for by him in 1839, "of the official and declared value of all British and Irish produce and manufactures exported from the united kingdom in each of the last ten years, distinguishing the

exports to Russia, Prussia, Germany, and Holland, and distinguishing woollens, cottons, silks, cutlery, and hardware, from other goods; and a similar return had also been made for the last two years. In these papers the export trade was estimated in two different ways—by the official value and by the actual and declared value; and it appeared that this trade, which was stated to be in a condition of decay, was according to the official value, which measured the quantity, and therefore, to a great degree the amount of the capital employed, and to a still greater degree the amount of industry set in motion, in a state of increase. In 1829, the official value of all our exports was, 56,217,000*l.*; in 1830, 61,152,000*l.*; in 1831, 60,686,000*l.*; in 1832, 65,025,000*l.*; in 1833, 69,987,000*l.*; in 1834, 73,835,000*l.*; in 1835, 78,360,000*l.*; in 1836, 85,220,000*l.*; in 1837, 72,544,000*l.*; in 1838, 92,459,000*l.*; in 1839, 97,394,000*l.*; in 1840, 102,705,000*l.* The same result was exhibited if the export trade was considered with respect to the real value, though the total in figures was not so large. In 1829, the real value was 35,842,000*l.*; in 1830, 38,271,000*l.*; in 1831, 37,164,000*l.*; in 1832, 36,450,000*l.*; in 1833, 39,667,000*l.*; in 1834, 41,649,000*l.*; in 1835, 47,372,000*l.*; in 1836, 53,293,000*l.*; in 1837, there was a falling off, the declared value being 42,069,245*l.*; in 1838, it was 50,000,000*l.*; in 1839, 53,222,000*l.*; in 1840, 51,406,000*l.* This, then, showed a progressive increase in our export trade. Then, how stood the case with respect to the particular countries to which the exports went? He found that the official value of our exports to Russia, Prussia, Germany, Holland, and Belgium, had also progressively increased. During the last four years, the amount of our export trade to those countries, in official value, was as follows:—In 1837, 17,597,000*l.*; in 1838, 18,162,000*l.*; in 1839, 19,347,623*l.*; in 1840, 20,549,000*l.* Practically, then, the export trade of the country was in a state of progressive increase. The noble Earl said, that might be true, but this circumstance ought to be taken into consideration, that the increase had taken place in articles of imperfect manufacture; and that, therefore, the profit to the exporter was less. To a very small degree this might be so. [Earl Fitzwilliam the profit might be more.] He had shown that the increase in the export of the two sorts taken together was enormous, though the decrease on articles perfectly manufactured was in no propor-

tion to the increase on the other sort. Now, he could not see what particular ground of complaint a spinner employed in spinning cotton had, if there should be a certain diminution in the export of woollen manufactures to the particular place to which his cotton twist went. The increase in the export of cotton yarn was exceedingly great during the whole period of twelve years he had referred to, had the diminution in the export of perfectly manufactured goods comparatively trifling; and it was a remarkable fact, that, on dividing that term into three periods of four years each, it appeared that the second period, when the export was highest, comprised the years 1833, 1834, 1835, and 1836, when the average price of corn was lowest: when the duty was the highest, and when the importation was next to nothing. He did not wish to draw inferences at the present moment from these facts; but he thought he had stated enough to induce their Lordships not to place too much confidence in the opinions expressed by the noble Earl. As far as he was individually concerned, he could say, that he had never supported any bill on the subject of the Corn-laws on any other principle than the strong necessity of not allowing this country to be dependent on foreign nations for the supply of the first necessary of life. The evils attending this course were, in his mind, far less than those that must result from a contrary line of proceeding. The noble Earl had complimented the noble Duke for the excellent manner in which he administered the large property of which he was possessed, and he trusted, that those who were inferior to that noble Duke in wealth, rank, and station, and could not be like that noble Duke, the dispensers of great bounty derived from great possessions, were nevertheless influenced, not by the miserable, wretched, and selfish objects, that were sometimes ascribed to them, but by a sincere anxiety to do their duty to those who called upon them for support and protection.

The Duke of Rutland said, he should always attribute the political conduct of the noble Earl opposite, who had introduced this discussion, to pure patriotism, and the desire of public benefit; but before he could change the opinions he had invariably held on this subject, the noble Earl must adduce very different arguments from those he had ever heard him bring forward in that House, for he did not think they could enact any better system, as regarded

this law, than that of the inverse ratio of price; so that when the price in this country was high, the duty should fade into nothing; and when the price was low, the duty should be such as should equally promote the interests of the home-grower and consumer. At that moment the labourers in that part of the country where he resided were getting from 13s. 6d. to 14s. a week, and, he had no doubt, they would prefer having corn at a remunerating price to their employers, with a high rate of wages, than low wages without corn being at such remunerating price. He hoped, also, notwithstanding what had been said by some noble Lords, that it might never be supposed that he, or those who thought with him on this subject, would be otherwise than anxious to hear the opinions of all classes of her Majesty's subjects on so important a question as the Corn-laws.

The Earl of Stradbroke said, he could state most positively, that in the eastern parts of England, wages had risen with the price of corn. In the years 1834 and 1835, when the price was low, wages were only 8s. per week; but when the price rose, wages had also risen to their present amount of 11s. and 12s. a week.

Earl Fitzwilliam said, the case as quoted by the noble Earl opposite, very much confirmed what he had himself stated—which was this, that the exports from this country of half-manufactured goods had increased, but the exports of complete manufactured goods to those countries of Europe in which we had not a monopoly were diminished.

The Duke of Wellington: You are quite mistaken.

Earl Fitzwilliam proceeded. If our colonies increased in population, and we had a monopoly of the colonial markets, it was obvious, that the markets for our manufactures must increase, and, therefore, he said, that the markets where we had not a monopoly of articles into which the greatest quantity of labour entered, had diminished.

The Duke of Wellington said, that from the year 1829 to the present year, the exports from this country had increased in official value from 56,217,000*l.* to 102,705,372*l.* The noble Earl was mistaken, too, as to the exports of complete manufactured goods, for those also had increased. Whatever, then, might be the case with regard to the Corn-laws, the returns from which he had just quoted, proved distinctly, that our manufactures and commerce could not be considered as in a very unfortunate state, either in reference to

quantity or value. But, although he differed from the noble Earl in some points, he cordially concurred with him in the feeling, that the prosperity of the agriculturist must depend on the general prosperity of the manufacturer, and of commercial interests in general. There could be no doubt about that, and these Corn-laws were supported, not with a view to the advantage of any particular interest or class of men, but with a view to render the whole country independent of foreign countries in respect of its supply of food. He believed, that all parts of the country, and every individual resident in it, were interested in this subject. And, although, what the noble Earl stated a few nights ago was perfectly true, that it was impossible that agriculture could prosper without their Lordships deriving great advantage from it, yet he gave their Lordships credit for promoting the objects of this law for the sake of the people at large, and not for any dirty object of private interest.

The Earl of *Radnor* said, that if the object of these laws was, as stated by the noble Duke, to make this country independent of others for the supply of food, they had not answered the purpose for which they were intended. During the eleven years previous to 1839, we had imported more corn than in any eleven years before; it had, therefore, not rendered us independent of foreign countries for our supply of food. In fact, we had, during those eleven years, imported on an average 900 quarters of wheat per year, exclusive of the importation of flour and other species of grain. The noble Duke (*Rutland*) had said, that the price of wages had risen with the price of corn, but that had not been the case in the South. He knew, that in the southern and western parts of England, wages were on the same footing now as when the price of corn was much lower; and very naturally so, for wages did not depend on the price of corn, but, like other articles, on the supply in the market. With respect to the exports, the fact was, as had been stated by his noble Friend, that the export of finished goods had diminished in proportion to the unfinished. In 1829, the proportion was 61,000*l.* of perfect goods to 39,000*l.* of unfinished. In 1839, the proportion was exactly the reverse. It was 68,000*l.* imperfect to 32,000*l.* of perfect. This was a great injury to the operative, who lost the employment which would be derived from finishing, and that too the most valuable part of the employment. No man

who looked at the returns upon the Table of their Lordships' House, or who took the least trouble to make himself acquainted with what was passing in the country, could for a moment doubt, that the manufacturers of England were in a distressed state, and one of the proofs of this was to be found in the fact, that many of the manufactories were now working only half time. Their Lordships, he was afraid, were not sensible of the great distress which existed in the manufacturing districts. He would, therefore, beg leave to read an extract of a letter he had received from Manchester, dated May 16th. It was as follows:—

"The cotton mills in Stockport, Stalybridge, and Ashton, are nearly all working short time—four days per week. Two mills just beside where I live, will commence working five days per week, in the morning. The cotton trade is in a truly awful state."

He had received other letters from the manufacturing districts, describing the distress which existed there, the result of which was that:—

"In Bolton, every eighth house, shop, or factory, is vacant.

"In Stockport, about the same. Of the houses occupied, twelve and a half per cent. pay no rent.

"In Ashton and Oldham, the unoccupied property is ten per cent. of rental.

"In Manchester township, the proportion is eight per cent.

"In Salford, ten per cent."

His informant also stated:—

"I lately walked through a street with less than a hundred houses in it, of which two years ago, every one was inhabited, and counted twenty vacant.

"At Ringley, between Manchester and Bolton, stands a large factory, the owner of which offers it rent free, with a bonus of 1,000*l.* a-year, to anyone who will work it, keep his machinery in order, and enable the tenants of his cottages to pay rent.

"A factory at Garton, erected a few years ago, at an expense of 120,000*l.* was valued, eighteen months since, at 96,000*l.*, is now on sale, and is not expected to fetch more than 45,000*l.*

He had also been informed, that it appeared from an inquiry instituted by the mayor of Manchester, into the state of the poor—that amongst 2,000 families, there appeared to be 21,417 pawn-tickets, for property of the value of 2,780*l.*, and amongst other 2,000 families, pawn-tickets for 2,835*l.*, which would give for 10,000 families, the whole number whose cases

were investigated, upwards of 200,000 tickets, for property worth 41,700*l*. He believed, therefore, that the distress which existed was almost unexampled, and he had no doubt, that it was caused by the Corn-laws, which excluded our manufactures from the foreign market, and certainly, as the condition of our people showed, did not extend the home market. While he was on his legs, he would remind the House of the statements which he had made on a former occasion, with reference to the consumption of wheat in Ireland and Scotland. He had since then examined the returns laid on their Lordships' Table, and had found, that what he had stated, was quite accurate. He could but express some surprise, that noble Lords opposite, should have felt indignant at his having made statements which they must now know were perfectly true.

The Earl of *Haddington* strongly denied that any such sentiment had been expressed at his side of the House as the noble Earl, who spoke last, appeared to suppose: on the contrary, he heartily rejoiced, that Scotland and Ireland were able to retain such increased quantities of wheat for their own consumption.

Lord *Ashburton* wished to refer to one or two points which had arisen out of the present discussion. The official returns, in the first place, he would state clearly proved, that there was no progressive or habitual distress or decay in our commerce, and knowing, that great misery existed in the manufacturing districts, he was certainly surprised at this fact, and could not account for it. But admitting, that this distress existed, he believed, that they would enormously add to it by the adoption of the measures which the noble Earl opposite (Earl Fitzwilliam) recommended. Distresses at Manchester and Birmingham, especially at the latter place, had been more justly attributed to the disturbed state of the currency. The report of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce established this point. The prosperity of the manufacturing interest had grown up under and was contemporaneous with the present Corn-laws. It had risen from and (with occasional fluctuations) had gained its strength under the very laws, which, it was alleged, caused its ruin. All the large speculations were entered into by the manufacturers—the principal wealth of the country flowed from the manufacturing towns. The great part of the capital, both of the railways in his own county,

and of the eastern counties railway belonged to Manchester and Birmingham, and he ventured to assert, that of the 60,000,000*l*. invested in railway speculations, 50,000,000*l*. came from manufacturing towns. In his opinion, therefore, it was both the grossest folly and injustice on the part of the manufacturers to endeavour to put down the other interests of the country, and at the same time by this means to destroy their own home markets. If the Government had never agitated this question, if the Corn-laws had not been put forward as the cause of the existing commercial distress, such an idea would never have crossed the minds of the merchants or manufacturers. The question was one which caused the strongest excitement and suspense in the feelings of large classes of the people, and the noble Viscount, in opposition to his own declarations and the Government with whom he acted, incurred a most serious responsibility by again causing its general agitation. The report of the Chamber of Commerce to which he had already alluded, concluded by stating, that all speculations would be stopped, and trade severely checked, until the question was settled. He would only refer to one other point connected with this question. It had been alleged that this country was unable to provide a supply of corn equal to the demand, and that there was a constant necessity for the admission of foreign grain. But how were the real facts of the case as proved by the Parliamentary returns? Why, it was there shown, that in the years 1838 and 1839, a supply from foreign countries was wanted, but that in the six preceding years, 1837, 1836, 1835, 1834, 1833, and 1832, the supply of England and her colonies was sufficient for her consumption. In the four years preceding 1832, there was also a necessity for a small assistance from abroad, but in the seven previous years no such necessity existed, and the supply was amply sufficient. These facts proved, that in the long run of years, and under ordinary circumstances, our own supply was sufficient; and the very ground on which all the arguments against the Corn-laws were founded, was thereby cut from under the feet of their opponents. As the noble Earl had not entered at length into the various points connected with the question he (Lord Ashburton) should not feel himself justified in doing so; but if the noble Earl had considered the subject in all its bearings and ramifications, he should have been prepared to follow him,

and to prove, that the present Corn-laws fully answered the purposes for which they were enacted.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, it was quite true, when we had more than an ordinary supply of corn, that we did not want a foreign supply. When he had spoken of these Corn-laws as being new, he had been found fault with as mis-stating the case. But the noble Lord (Lord Ashburton) said, that they must look back to the year 1815, when the new law was introduced.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* stated, that this was the first time, that a Government came down to Parliament and proposed to impose a direct tax on bread. He contended, that this was the case, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated, that he expected to raise 700,000*l.* by means of his corn duties.

Lord *Ashburton* said, that on a former occasion he had mentioned the very extravagant and absurd opinions which were to be found in the report of the committee on export duties. He had before complained of the manner in which the inquiry had been conducted. None but free-trade philosophers were on the committee, and they only examined persons whose opinions were in accordance with their own. He might mention Mr. Hume, Mr. M'Gregor, and Mr. Porter, of the Board of Trade. It was the bounden duty of the Government, in a matter of such importance to have, at least, one of its Members on the committee to watch the proceedings, and it was most unfair that this report should be circulated throughout the country in the way it was, evidently to answer a party purpose, that of exciting agitation on the subject of the Corn-laws.

The Earl of *Radnor* defended the gentlemen alluded to by the noble Lord, and contended, that more efficient and able public servants were not to be met with, than Mr. M'Gregor, Mr. Hume, and Mr. Porter. The evidence given by these gentlemen before the committee which the noble Lord had referred to, was of the most valuable nature, and he was satisfied, would produce the strongest effects throughout the country. He did not find any opinions of these gentlemen in favour of free-trade at all stronger than those given on the same subject a few years ago, by the noble Lord himself.

Lord *Ashburton* denied, that he had made any attack on the three gentlemen alluded to; on the contrary, he believed, that they were most efficient public ser-

vants. At the same time, they were strongly biased in favour of certain opinions, and they were examined by gentlemen who entertained similar opinions to themselves. The consequence was, that their evidence before the Import Duties Committee, was altogether of a partial nature. He could not help strongly condemning the conduct of the Government, in sending persons about the country for the purpose of producing excitement by means of the exaggerated statements contained in that report.

The Earl of *Clarendon* felt bound to rise and give the most unqualified contradiction to the unwarrantable statement of the noble Lord, that the Government had sent persons about the country for the purpose of getting up agitation on this subject. The noble Lord might assume, that the committee of the other House, to which he had alluded, had put forth the most absurd and ridiculous opinions, but he would tell the noble Lord, that the country took a very different view of the report, and of the evidence taken before that committee, and which he was satisfied would not only be found to be one of the most important documents ever submitted to Parliament, but one which would produce the most important results. It had not only been extensively circulated throughout this country, but had also been circulated in great numbers on the continent, and had been reprinted in several different languages. Upwards of forty-six thousand copies of it had been circulated at home, and these had not been distributed by means of either public or private subscription, but had been regularly sold to persons who bought them for the purpose of reading them. The noble Lord might designate the opinions expressed in that report as absurd, empirical, and ridiculous; but he contended, that the report was nothing more than a fair embodiment of the opinions of the chief witnesses examined before the committee. Nothing in that evidence went so far in favour of free-trade as were the opinions formerly expressed by the noble Lord himself, in his speeches in another place on the subject of the Corn-laws. Those speeches were a most valuable repository of evidence in favour of free-trade, although they were diametrically opposed to every opinion on the subject now professed by the noble Lord. The noble Lord in 1815, and subsequently,



gave utterance to opinions which were infinitely more extravagant than anything that was to be met with in the evidence before the import duties committee. The noble Lord said, in 1815, in the House of Commons, that the proposed Corn-law would impose a tax on corn to the amount of eighteen millions and a half a year, and he complained in the strongest terms that this tax was not to be levied for the purposes of revenue, but merely with the view of putting the amount into the pockets of the landlords. Although this took place in 1815, the noble Lord now pleaded his excessive youth for the opinions he then expressed. Now, this was twenty-five years ago, and if they took the estimate of the noble Lord, it would make between three and 400,000,000 that the landlords of England had taken from the pockets of the people by means of the Corn-laws. He would ask the noble Lord whether any opinion nearly so extravagant as this was given before the import duties committee?

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, that the noble Earl might rely upon it that much weight would not be attached to his contradiction as to the conduct of the Government, when it was recollected what had taken place. It was well known to the country; it was well known to every man that had paid any attention to the proceedings of Parliament, that the noble Viscount at the head of the Government, made a speech last year, in which he condemned, in much stronger terms than had been used by any one else, the agitation of the subject, or the proposition for such changes as her Majesty's Ministers now proposed. After this it was impossible for any man not to believe, that her Majesty's Government had taken up the subject as a party question, and as that alone. He, however, would tell the Government, that they would totally fail in their object, for conduct so unworthy of the character of Ministers of the Crown must ruin the character of the Government in the estimation of the people. He should not have troubled the House, but he felt bound to say this much, after the observations of the noble Earl.

Lord *Ellenborough* observed, that the noble Earl had stated, that the report of the import duties committee had been extensively circulated, as well on the continent as in this country. If this was the case, it was very unfortunate that the ex-

amination before it had been conducted in the way in which it was. The witnesses entertained strong opinions in favour of one view of the subject, and they were examined by persons who entertained similar opinions to themselves. There had been no cross-examination of the witnesses. He could not tell why persons of opposite opinions did not attend the committee, but such was the case. That was not the mode of examination calculated to elicit the truth.

The Earl of *Radnor* contended, that the committee was fairly appointed. If the noble Lord thought, that the report was so extravagant and absurd, why did he not move for the appointment of a committee, when he could rebut the erroneous opinions, and counteract the effect of the poison which he alleged was to be met with in the import duties report. If the noble Lord did this, he might not only call fresh witnesses, but the public would have the advantage of his cross-examination of Messrs. Macgregor, Hume, and Porter.

Lord *Ashburton* said, that the committee had been agreed to upon the usual parliamentary understanding that it should be fairly composed. There were put upon the committee two or three gentlemen opposed to the repeal of the Corn-laws. But no notion was entertained that any design of taking evidence against those laws existed. It was the duty of the Government, in a case of so much importance, to take care that the committee was attended by some one or two persons at least connected with the Administration. The noble Earl must know that it was never the habit of any committee to sit upon a subject of this magnitude without the Government proposing to bring forward some measure. The noble Earl had taunted him with the desertion of opinions which he had entertained when a very young man, twenty-five years since. The course which he took upon that occasion had been misrepresented. The real circumstances of the case were these:—Sir H. Parnell proposed 86s. as the price at which foreign corn might be imported; the Government proposed 80s.; and he moved that the price of 76s. be substituted. He might have expressed himself strongly as to the danger which might result from an excess of protection to the landed interests. The principle which he wished to establish was that of fair pro-

tection. If a fair protection was proposed for any branch of commerce, trade, or manufactures, and the protection could be properly conceded without injury to other interests, he was as ready to extend it as any man in public life. But if, on the contrary, a measure was brought forward which he did not think consistent with the general interests of the country, he would feel it his duty then, as now, to oppose it. If the noble Earl could prove to him that an unlimited free trade would be consistent with the safety of the country and the large interests at stake, he would then become an advocate for it, not caring one straw for what might be said about his consistency.

The Marquess of *Normanby* was desirous that the House should not be unaware of the mode in which the noble Earl opposite (*Wicklow*) had risen to make what he considered a most unfair and uncandid attack upon his noble Friend at the head of the Administration, who happened then, for the first time during the evening, to be absent from his place. The discussion which had arisen upon the presentation of a petition had been protracted for two hours, and the noble Viscount retired in the conviction that the discussion had terminated. The noble Duke opposite, who was also a most regular attendant at their debates, had likewise left the House in the same conviction. He begged to remark, that no recent change whatever had been made in the intentions of the Government. Every item in their plan had been determined upon by them long before the Easter recess, and in no single respect had the slightest change arisen from any of the events which had since taken place. Why choose the period when his noble Friend happened to be absent to bring forward a charge which he must characterize as neither very fair nor very candid?

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, that he had not taken any part in the present discussion until the noble Earl opposite had spoken and had attempted to justify the Government, of which he was a Member, for their conduct with respect to the present measure. It had been in answer to that defence that he had made the observations against the noble Viscount, who was, though in his opinion he ought not to have been, absent; and these observations, he must say, were directed against the Government generally, and not par-

ticularly against the noble Viscount. This had been the first year in which the Government had taken up the subject as a Government, and it was against the Government alone, that his remarks were made. But with regard to the noble Viscount himself, he had no hesitation in saying that a more inconsistent line of conduct he had never read or heard of in the whole course of his political experience, and this he would as readily—in fact a great deal more readily—repeat when the noble Viscount was present than in his absence. It was unfair on the part of the noble Marquess to say, that his observations were made in consequence of the absence of the noble Viscount. He could positively declare that it was not the case, and he appealed to his conduct ever since his entrance into public life as a proof of his assertion. He had said, and he would again repeat it, and the country, he believed, entertained the same opinion, that never was a more inconsistent line of conduct pursued by any politician than by the noble Viscount on the present question; and that the explanation which the noble Viscount had offered had still further lowered him in the estimation of their Lordships and of the country.

The Marquess of *Normanby* did not complain of the noble Earl's motives, but his acts. He must repeat, that the noble Earl had seized a most unfortunate opportunity, and had made what he considered an uncandid attack.

Lord *Ellenborough* said, that having heard both the original remarks of his noble Friend behind him (the Earl of *Wicklow*) and the reply of the noble Marquess, he could not think that the language used by the noble Marquess was at all suited to the circumstances of the case. It could not be fairly said, that his noble Friend "had taken an opportunity" at all. His noble Friend had expressed his opinion on the question before the House, and upon the conduct of the Government connected with it; and surely the accidental circumstance of the noble Viscount's absence ought not to have prevented him from so doing. The general conduct of his noble Friend on all occasions proved that he would express his opinions at all times, and to all men; and the just censure which he had passed upon the Government could not for a moment be supposed to have been in the

slightest degree influenced by the absence of the noble Viscount.

Conversation ended.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, May 17, 1841.*

*Mrs. Worsa.*] Bills. Read a second time:—Victoria Park; School Sites.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hume, Mr. Wilbraham, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. F. Maule, Mr. Grote, Mr. Macaulay, Mr. Ward, Mr. Humphreys, Lord Powerscourt, and other hon. Members, from Lincolnshire, Forfar, Uxbridge, Salford, Edinburgh, Southwark, Bath, various Parishes in London, and many other places, for the Government measure for the Alteration of the Tariff, and for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir C. Burrell, Mr. Hodgson, Sir R. Inglis, the Marquess of Granby, Mr. G. Heathcote, Sir E. Filmer, Mr. Ingham, Mr. Pusey, and several other hon. Members, from Eccles, Dunse, Welford, Boxford, Ashton, Wolverhampton, and many other places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

### SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS— ADJOURNED DEBATE (SEVENTH DAY).]

Sir E. Knatchbull, who was in possession of the chair, said, that the subject appeared to him to be pretty nearly exhausted, and therefore he should not trouble the House with any observations upon it, more particularly as he understood there were twelve or fourteen gentlemen on the other side of the House who were very anxious to speak.

Sir C. Grey was of opinion that those who opposed the measure of the Government, had not taken a fair and regular course. The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not pledged the House to any particular course by the proposition he had made, because the question in detail was to be considered in committee. The noble Viscount, however, had proposed a measure by which he called upon the House to refuse to accede to any reduction of the duties on foreign sugar for two reasons, viz., first, that our example in abolishing slavery in our own colonies had not been followed by its final extinction in foreign countries, and secondly, that a sufficient supply of sugar for home consumption could be furnished by the West Indies. The latter assertion had been most flatly and positively contradicted by a remonstrance which had been presented to that House from five West-Indian agents, who had stated that the supply would not be sufficient even for the ensuing year. He believed that those who opposed the measure of the Government were distressed to find argu-

ments against it. He could not understand why, because Cuba and Brazil employed slave-labour, they should object to the House having an opportunity to consider from what other countries sugar might be obtained. The amendment of the noble Viscount had no solid foothold. No sound argument had been advanced to support it. It was said that the West-Indian interest would be destroyed if the proposition of the Government were carried; but he had not heard anything which demonstrated the certainty or probability of such a result. For the first time, he believed, in that House, an hon. Member (the hon. Member for Beverley) had spoken avowedly as the representative of the East-India Company, a body whose opinions were entitled to attention both in and out of the House, because of their great power and influence. But he must confess himself much surprised at the sentiments uttered by the hon. Member for Beverley as the representative of the East-India Company, because, as the House must recollect, that same body had protested against the monopolizing spirit of the West-India body, and claimed to be put on the same footing. But no sooner was that concession obtained, than they became the loudest in opposing a measure, not for putting other countries on the same footing, but for relieving them of those prohibitory duties which prevented their produce from coming into our markets. The hon. Member for Kilmarnock and the noble Lord the Member for South Lancashire, and other hon. Members, had declared that the Government had made this a party measure; he did not so regard it, but thought it one which was calculated to place this country in its proper position—at the head of the commerce of the world. He thought the proposal of Government had not been met in a spirit of fairness. In the time of Mr. Huskisson the principles of free trade were promulgated and defended in the clearest and most forcible manner by some of those who now most violently opposed them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was accused on the one side of undue precipitancy in bringing forward this scheme, on the other of inconsistency in not having supported the motion for the reduction of the sugar duties made last Session by the hon. Member for Wigan. With respect to the charge of undue haste, it was well known that the founda-

tion of the Government measure was the report of the Import Duties Committee, which sat last Session, and examined a great number of persons, collecting a large mass of most valuable information. That report, in which were best explained the reasons which had prevailed with Government to bring forward the measures which they had announced to the House, had been in the hands of Members for months, and if hon. Gentlemen had neglected to read and study it, they had no right to say that they were taken by surprise on this occasion. With respect to the reduction of duty, he was convinced that it was an error in political economy to say, that an import duty was paid by the consumer. No import duty could long exist without coming directly or indirectly out of the rent of the land from which the taxed produce was grown. If that were so, the duty on foreign sugar would be paid, not by the population of this country, but by the proprietors of the slaves of Cuba and Brazil. The present aspect of foreign affairs, combined with the active competition of rival nations, rendered it imperative on us, in his opinion, to adopt every measure for the development of our resources. He alluded to the vast field for British industry and enterprise which was presented, not by Brazil and Cuba merely, but by the other states of South America, as well as by the tribes of Africa and Central Asia. Three continents were holding out their hands to us, whose inhabitants were eager to establish with us relations of friendship and of reciprocal benefit, and were they to be repulsed with a cold and sullen denial? He called on the House to interfere and get rid of that heap of miserable contrivances called monopolies and prohibitions, which, for whatever purpose they were established, had wrought nothing but general mischief to the mass of our population. By adopting a more wise commercial policy, and establishing that liberal system which was rendered necessary by the exigencies of our age and situation, they would double the produce of the customs, and open a boundless career to the activity of our countrymen. Let hon. Members who were opposed to the abolition of restrictions in our colonial trade call to mind the Spanish colonies, the system pursued in which had reacted with fatal effect on the mother country, and had led at length to the breaking up of the colonial

empire of Spain. He regretted that the hon. Member for Antrim was not now in his place, or he would have entered upon the objections the hon. Member had raised to the Government proposition; but he must express his surprise that such a body as the East-India Company, now no longer a trading community, but the governors of a vast territory, and who recently had received such large concessions, should, on this occasion, join with their old opponents, and contend for prohibition. It had been said, that upon the result of this debate would depend either the dissolution of Parliament, or the resignation of Ministers. If that were so, it became the bounden duty of those who sought to drive the Government from power, to let the country know what course they meant to pursue if they came in. It became the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, as the head of his party in this great country, to tell the House and the people plainly, the principles upon which the present opposition was maintained—at present, nothing to that purport could be collected from the amendment of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, or from the varying arguments of those hon. Members who had as yet followed him. He had not the most remote idea or conception upon what grounds the party opposite were to come into power, and, whatever calamities might ensue from that fact, all that the country would know was, that the parties in office were changed—that one Ministry had been superseded by another, after a very partial and imperfect discussion of the topics which induced that change. He had himself been asked by intelligent foreigners, from almost all nations, what it was that was now going on? Was he to answer, that a change of the English Ministry had taken place, because the party opposite had taken fright at the intimation given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that he meant to propose to reduce from 63s. to 36s. the import duties on foreign-grown sugar?

Mr. *Smythe* said, that he would not detain the House many minutes in explaining his reasons for the vote which he intended to give upon the question now before the House. He was willing to admit that the measure of the noble Lord was calculated undoubtedly to be a considerable benefit to the consumer in this country; and he thought it had been well put by the Chancellor of the Exchequer,

that they could not at the same time say that he was ruining the West-Indies, and that he would not get his money. He fully believed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would succeed in fulfilling the anticipations of revenue stated in his budget; but the ground on which he should support the motion of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, was this—that the detriment to our colonies, and the damage which would be done to our national character by such a measure as this, would more than countervail any benefit to the consumer, or the revenue of the country. He believed, that the proposed reduction would produce that amount of revenue which the Chancellor of the Exchequer anticipated, because it was an axiom in the history of commercial taxation, that the reduction of duty upon articles of such general demand, invariably increased the consumption to a much more than proportionate extent. By the gradual reduction of the duties on coffee, the demand and the produce had been quadrupled. As to the East-Indies, they had just passed a measure placing that country on an equality with our other colonies; and he asked the House, with some confidence, whether they would to-day confer the greatest boon, and to-morrow, not merely take it away, but actually place that country in a worse position than before? In this very Session they had equalized the duties on East and West-India rum; and could the House suppose that a trade like that of the West Indies, still staggering under the effects of the great experiment of emancipation, could survive these repeated and peculiar difficulties? The reasons, therefore, which induced him to come to the conclusion which he had expressed were, that the proposed measure would be highly detrimental, both to the East and West Indies, and that it would likewise be injurious to the character of this great nation, which he should regret to see stultify itself, as it would do if it adopted such a measure as the present, after its recent sacrifices and exertions to put down slavery in its own possessions. He begged to apologize to the House for having taken up its time.

Mr. Ainsworth said, as the attention of this House had been repeatedly called to the distress in the borough of Bolton, and as the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had thought proper to allude

to that distress, in his developement of the plan of the Government, he trusted he might be permitted, for a short space, to state the grounds on which he supported the noble Lord's proposition. From the result of an investigation made in Bolton, he learned that there were 1,500 unoccupied houses in that borough, and that the pressure of distress which had existed so long, still continued undiminished. He considered it to be the duty of every representative of a large commercial community to endeavour, under such circumstances, to ascertain the causes which had led to such a depression in trade. He found that whilst our home trade had flourished, that with foreign nations had been crippled in consequence of our not being able to exchange the productions of our manufacturing industry for the staple commodities of other countries. It was not his intention to go into the question of slavery; that had already been ably disposed of by hon. Members who had preceded him, but he wished to point out the advantages we might expect from a treaty arranged on a broader commercial basis with the Brazils. It appeared from the declared value of our exports, that our trade with that country amounted to from two to three millions sterling annually; but according to the custom-house returns of the Brazils, the amount rose to nearly five millions; taking the average between the two, we might reckon the trade equal to between three and four millions yearly. Now, what did we receive from Brazil in return? Cotton, the produce of slave-labour came direct to this country. Coffee, which was obliged to go to the Cape of Good Hope to be colonized before it could be received here, and sugar, which was taken to Hamburg to be sold, and from whence bills in payment were remitted to our merchants in England at a considerable loss to them. Now, he had no doubt, that if a system of liberal free trade policy, such as her Majesty's Government contemplated were adopted between this country and the Brazils, our trade in that quarter would increase rapidly; be carried on upon more advantageous terms, and enable us to find employment for a vast proportion of the masses of our suffering population; for, whatever might be the case with countries whose ports were on the Baltic, who, it had been argued would not receive our manu-

factures in exchange for their corn; here was a nation ready to meet us fairly in the market, and to exchange commodities on equal terms. In confirmation of his assertion, he would refer to the evidence taken before the Import Duties Committee.

"Mr. Saunders, was asked,

"Q. Is there anything else you wish to state to the committee?—A. I would point out the great obstructions generally to which we are exposed in not getting earlier returns, and which forbids us turning over our capital oftener. Were we able to take Brazilian produce and consume it here, it would enhance the price in Brazil, and enable them to consume more of our manufactures.

"Q. Have the merchants trading to Brazil any apprehension that the duty on British goods imported into the Brazils will be advanced.—A. They have—from the non-admission of their products for consumption in England.

"Q. Are you of opinion that an adherence to our protective system will endanger our exports to the Brazils?—A. At the expiration of our treaty, when they will be able to retaliate."

"Mr. McGregor was asked,

"Q. Does not the refusal of England to take coffee from the Brazils, limit very much the introduction of British manufacture into that country?—A. Within the last three or four years the limitation has been going on, not that the amount of exports have been decreased, but that *they have not increased*, according to that which would naturally take place in all new countries like Brazil. The Brazilians now are consuming, and will go on increasing their consumption, to the exclusion in proportion of British, for the goods of Austria, France, and Switzerland."

The present treaty with the Brazils expired next year, and he could not understand the policy of hon. Members representing manufacturing districts refusing to extend our trade with Brazil. His hon. Friend the Member for Newark had asked what the poor weavers of Bolton would gain by a reduction of 1s. 6d. per cwt. on the price of sugar. So far certainly they would not gain much, but the poor weavers of Bolton well knew, that if the Government carried this question they would ultimately abolish all monopolies, and that they (the weavers) would then be enabled not only to purchase their sugar, but all the other necessities of life on fair and reasonable terms. He contended that it was the bounden duty of this House to watch over and protect the

interests of the poorer classes. He was surprised at the hon. Member for Wiltshire calling this a "paltry fiscal question." Did the hon. Member know anything of the depressed and suffering state of the manufacturing towns in the north, and of the relief which an arrangement of the fiscal burthens of the country such as that proposed by the Government would afford? There was scarcely a manufacturing town in the kingdom which was not suffering under the depression of trade, and he felt it to be his duty at this moment to support the proposals of the Government, believing that the effect of them would be to increase the demand for manufactures and to place our export trade upon a broader and more satisfactory basis.

Mr. Hodges regretted, that the three questions of the sugar, timber, and corn duties had been combined, for he could trace no necessary connection, or even similarity between them. The measure regarding sugar had been so well argued, that he would offer no observations upon it. In regard to the question of the timber, although the importation of foreign timber had caused great loss to the growers of English timber, and to himself as one of them, he believed that this country did not produce timber sufficient for its own wants, and certainly not sufficient to meet the wants of Ireland; and considering, therefore, that benefit would be derived to the public at large, by allowing better timber to be imported than hitherto was the case, he should vote also in favour of that measure. In respect to the Corn-laws, he felt himself bound to take a different course. It had been stated by the right hon. and gallant Member for Cornwall, as an instance of the successful competition of foreign manufactures, that fire arms could be purchased in Belgium one-third cheaper than in England. Are we to infer then, that it is intended that the average price of corn in England should be reduced one-third in amount? If the price of home-grown corn was reduced one-third of the present average price, if it was reduced from 60s. to 40s. a quarter, he put it to the House whether it was possible to keep land of average quality in England in cultivation? It was impossible. He dreaded the effect of any agricultural panic which might arise from the proposed reduction in the import duty on foreign corn; many thousands of labourers must be thrown out of work, and it would be a very difficult matter, under such circum-

stances, to maintain tranquillity throughout the country. He thought the regular and constant supply of corn in the market, derived from the British threshing floors, a source of security to the consumer against undue speculation in corn—it was well known, that the farmers in general could not afford long to retain their corn—the constant demands upon them for rates, tithe, rent, and labour, compelled them to be as constantly taking their produce to market, thus causing a regular supply. He thought that system a dangerous one which would throw the supply of food into the hands of great capitalists, who would acquire the power of controlling the price at which the public would have it. We saw very plainly the effects of monopoly in the hands of the great monied capitalists, by what was going on in regard to rail-road travelling, which would become intolerable, unless Parliament effectually interfered in protecting the public. His opinion was, that no fixed duty sufficient to protect the home-corn grower could be maintained, especially in those seasons when it was most required. He considered, that it was incumbent on any Minister proposing an alteration in the present corn-laws, with a view to reduce the price permanently, at the same time to regard the burdens now by law imposed on the land, with a view to a corresponding abatement of them, and among them, the recent act for the Commutation of Tithes, had essentially altered the situation of the landowner and occupier; before that act passed, if by any alteration of the existing corn-laws, or from any other cause, the farmer ceased to grow corn and laid down his land for pasture, he, by so doing, ceased to pay a corn tithe, but by the Act for converting payments for tithes into a rent charge for ever, although corn might cease to be grown, and the land, then converted to pasture, as generally would be the case, turn out of very little value, still the same rent-charge must be paid, as if still yielding a corn crop. But a serious national evil must arise from the abandonment of the cultivation of a very large portion of the present arable land of England; for the capital after great loss had been sustained thus withdrawn, from the cultivation of British soil, would inevitably be transferred to the cultivation of foreign soil. It was well known, that British capital went to aid the production of whatever was required for British consumption; it went to France to aid the wine-grower; to

America, to aid the cotton-grower: the Island of Madeira had long been understood to be mortgaged to the English merchants; and there could not be a doubt that our capital would go out to large amounts to promote the cultivation of that immense tract of rich alluvial land, stretching from the Black-sea to the Baltic, thus enriching Russia by the impoverishment of our own soil; and our principal supply of corn therefore being derived from the northern ports, the main staple of our food would be entirely within the power and fiscal control of great and rival nations, who might be tempted to inflict upon us the severest calamities, when they became conscious of their ability to do so. These were a few of the reasons which would lead him to vote against the proposed fixed import duty on wheat of foreign growth. The present sliding scale of duties, though never yet fairly carried out by reason of the notorious frauds in taking the averages, had, on the whole, maintained as steady a price of corn as could under any other plan be effected, and as such had equally benefitted the manufacturer and the landowner.

Mr. Trotter was understood to say, that he regretted the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had brought forward the question of timber duties, more especially when Lord Sydenham had informed him, that any alteration would be productive of great discontent in Canada. He thought that a judicious alteration of the sugar duties might open new fields for our manufactures, but he was not prepared to vote for the proposals of Government on this point. In regard to the Corn-laws, he did not think that the existing distress of the manufacturers was attributable to the present system of duties on foreign grain. Indeed, the year in which the export of manufactured goods was greatest, was a year in which there was no import of corn, and during six years, when wages were most depressed, there was an average excess of exports of upwards of 11,000,000*l*.

Mr. William Roche said, that his position did not call upon nor enable him to enter minutely, like the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, into the statistics of manufactures; but whether they are progressing, stationary, or declining, it must surely be admitted, that in proportion as new and extensive outlets are afforded them, they will largely and incalculably advance, and consequently bring

an increase of employment and resources to this country, calculated as England is, beyond all other nations, to avail herself of such advantages. The hon. Gentleman, too, who spoke last at this side of the House, indulged pretty largely in expressions of despondency in reference to the influence of the proposed change in the Corn-laws; but he (Mr. Roche) was of opinion that the hon. Gentleman's apprehensions were quite imaginary, and the result of those fears generated by that habitual sensibility which actuated the landlord and the farmer (but wearing away pretty rapidly as regarded the latter), whenever the corn question was ever so slightly touched upon. But surely, whether the price be affected a little or not, something like steadiness of price and supply, when needed, was a vastly greater boon, for it would enable the landlord and the tenant to adopt a more steady and certain principle of negotiation in their respective relations. The one would better know what he ought to ask, and the other what he ought to give; and as regarded supplies, when required, they would proceed in a regular even stream, instead of coming, as they now did, like an "avalanche" on the market. Our monetary system, also, was, every year or two, thereby placed in the most perilous predicament, paralysing every species of commerce and trade, from the consequences of which the agriculturist himself must materially suffer. Must not also the home market of corn always command a great preponderance over foreign grain, saddled as it would be by all the expenses of transit, agency and waste? Besides that, it must cause some rise in those foreign markets themselves, when the demand was rendered steady and continuous. The disparity of present and future prices was not therefore likely to be material, but it would render international commerce in grain of a steady character, and divest it of those perilous consequences to our monetary and industrial system in general which attended the present lottery-like state of things, causing, as it would, corn to be paid for, not as now, by exhausting our coin, but by promoting our manufactures; and surely the agriculturists would ever find their best customers in a body of wealthy, well-employed manufacturers. Then, with regard to timber, could the Chancellor of the Exchequer touch it more lightly than he did—very many thought inexcusably light? He (Mr. Roche) built a good deal,

and had often reason to complain of the dearth of sound timber and the perishable nature of the cheap and favoured description; but could any exception be fairly taken to the charge when so large a preponderance was still left in favour of colonial produce? It was, however, with regard to the sugar question in reference to its bearing on slavery, that he principally wished to express his opinion and feelings. To slavery he ever entertained the deepest indignation and the liveliest abhorrence, as a stain on humanity and a still greater stain on Christianity—as the greatest outrage man could inflict upon his fellow man, and the most flagitious assumption of superiority that one human being could exercise upon another, alike the image of the same Creator whether born under a torrid or a temperate zone, and whether, in consequence, his complexion be black, brown, or fair. It was this very abhorrence that influenced him in voting for the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and for the following reasons:—first, because he was confident her Majesty's Ministers, from the many and magnanimous proofs they had given of their uncompromising hostility to slavery, had long and deeply considered the influence of this measure on that question, and that they had arrived at the mature opinion, that so far from retarding, it would greatly accelerate the overthrow of that moral turpitude and social pestilence. Equally sure was he that they never will relax their exertions, but grapple with slavery until, so far as their influence can extend, every vestige of it shall cease to exist. But, independently of this personal confidence, did not experience amply prove that free labour, free trade, and free agency of every kind were not promoted but kept down and crippled by mis-called protection? and this very evening was not a petition presented from silk manufacturers, repudiating its supposed advantage? In fact, excessive protection paralysed the energy and elasticity inherent in freedom of action, which, like a hardy plant, flourished better in the keen breeze of competition, than in the hothouse atmosphere of protection. Might not, too, the slave-employer say to us—yes, you boast the superiority of free over forced labour, but does your conduct square with your assertions? for, if so, why do you bolster it up with vast protection, and oppose slave-labour with similar prohibitions?



Place both on an equal footing, let there be a clear stage and no favour, and, if then we find your opinions realised, why, we will for our own interests acknowledge our error, abandon our ideas, and adopt yours. Now, convinced, as we, the advocates of free labour, are of its superiority, would it not be well and reasonable to meet its opponents on their own terms, and thus convince them by the evidence of facts, and by the influence of self-interest, so much more persuasive with such persons than volumes of moral homilies? He said, he valued little the piety, humanity, or consistency, of those who singled out one article, sugar, for their attack, while they allowed a multitude of others, alike obnoxious, to remain untouched and un-reproved, or who allowed themselves to share the profit of foreign consumption while they affected to deprecate the criminality of home enjoyment, forgetting the maxim "*qui facit per alium facit per se.*" It put him in mind of a mercantile house in the city, to which he belonged, which house scrupled to make up provisions, beef and pork, directly for the Government, because then engaged in the late French war, yet hesitated not to sell these provisions to those who they knew wanted them for Government purposes. Every one heard it rumoured, that Ministers should or would resign in case they failed to carry their present measures, but with his opinion, that these measures were calculated to expand the resources, to extend the commerce, and increase the employment and comforts of the people, he could not but say, that if they did under such circumstances retire, it would be like the setting sun, ere long to rise again with renewed lustre. He would conclude with remarking, that if his opinions were correct in an abstract and moral point of view, how much more fortified and gratified by the reflection, that these measures would so essentially contribute to the comfort and improvement of the mass of the people,—a people so praiseworthily tranquil under many trying privations, but whose patience and forbearance it would be alike ungenerous and impolitic to test too severely. Then, if he looked to his own country, Ireland, and saw the great and glorious conquest they, its people, achieved over the deepest-rooted of their passions and prepossessions, by the relinquishment of the exciting but infuriating influence of ardent spirits, excusable,

if anything could excuse it, by the utter privation of every comfort under which they existed. Should we not, then, anxiously promote, and strive to perpetuate this great moral and social improvement and example, by rendering attainable to them "the cup which cheers, but not inebriates," and facilitating every other innocent substitute and comfort, towards which, he was of opinion, these and similar measures were calculated to contribute, and should, therefore, have his warm support.

Mr. Tufnell said, that he should have been content to have given a silent vote on the present occasion, had not the great maritime borough which he represented, felt the deepest possible interest in the decision to which the House might arrive on the momentous question now before them. He was forcibly reminded of the intense interest his constituents entertained on this topic, from having a short time since, when coming forward as a candidate, witnessed the conversion of his opponent (the connection of the right hon. Baronet opposite, and he believed as good a monopolist as any of the Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House,) to the doctrine of free trade in corn. He had seen that Gentleman, unable to resist the intreaties of the distressed artisans, and the universal wish of the electors, declare that he could not refuse to grant them cheap bread. When he recollected, that in the year 1828, Mr. Dawson had either, with a wonderful degree of prescience, or at any rate by some happy accident, proved a marvellous true prophet of the conversion of the right hon. Baronet on the question of Catholic Emancipation, he confessed he had been led to entertain some hopes that such might also prove the case on the present occasion. Whatever hopes, however, he had entertained, had been entirely destroyed by the tone adopted by some of the Gentlemen on his side of the House, who represented peculiarly the agricultural interest, and also had boldly stated that they objected to any alteration in the sugar monopoly because it might indirectly affect the question of the Corn-laws. Now this appeared a weak and dangerous line of argument. How could they say to the people, "We oppose the present measure, which may be calculated, in itself, to benefit the community, not on its own merits, but because it may lead to the downfall of another

monopoly, in the benefits of a bill we participate." He derived every shilling himself from land, but he should be ashamed on a crisis like this, when other interests were called on to make sacrifices, were he not also himself prepared to contribute his own share in order to relieve the distresses of the country. He intreated hon. Members connected with the agricultural interest, to consider in what position they placed themselves—they had passed the Poor-law Bill, and taught the labouring man to rely on his own resources for subsistence—and were they not bound, then, to afford him every means in their power to save his own independence by cheapening the necessities of life, and exerting themselves to open fresh markets for his labour. By the operation of the Poor-law Bill, they had been able to save millions, which had been formerly spent in providing for the poor; it might be said that it had been improperly spent, but still the money had come out of the pockets of the agriculturists, and they had benefitted by the change. How could they now come forward, when measures were under discussion calculated to benefit the poor to an immense extent, and meet them with a decided negative. Would it raise their character, or render their cause more popular in the country. The right hon. Baronet obtained their support on the present occasion as the advocate of all monopoly—as the defender of one which the agricultural interests in its wisdom considered as the outwork of others. If the right hon. Baronet accepted their support on any other ground, he was bound to explain himself fully, or he will be clearly receiving their confidence under false pretences. Unless he was prepared strictly to adhere to the principle of sustaining every important monopoly in the country, he was not entitled to receive their votes. By the present measures before the House, the Chancellor of the Exchequer's object was to guarantee a moderate price of sugar, an article of such universal consumption, as any material rise in which affected so materially the labouring classes. He proposed to do this by reducing the protective duty on foreign sugar, from about 200 per cent. at which it at present stood, to 50 per cent., so that when the price of West-India sugar rose so high, it would be immediately checked by the competition of the foreign sugar, and the distress of the great body of consumers

immediately alleviated. Some hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to consider that the present distress would be only temporary. He trusted that it might be so, but when he reflected on the circumstances that had for a very long time led to this state of embarrassment, and the rapidity with which foreign rivals were every day starting up to compete with our own manufacturers, he confessed that, without some great change, he could hardly hope for relief. It should also be remembered, that the only alternative we had to adopt, were the present measures for meeting our financial difficulties not adopted, would be the imposition of fresh taxes on a population already overburthened, or depressing, to a still greater extent, the springs and sources of industry. The question was not merely whether the present measure was in itself good, but whether the only alternative would not produce the most frightful consequences—heightening the price of the necessities of life to a people already scarcely able to find the means of subsistence, depressing the manufacturing interest, which could hardly now keep its ground against foreign competition, and spreading dismay through every branch of industry, which was already too much dejected. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, had taunted Ministers with having brought forward these measures when they were tottering to their fall. Whether the noble Lord was right in his prediction or not, it remained for that House and the country to decide. But, whatever might be the result of the present and future divisions, he (Mr. Tufnell) rejoiced to perceive that another system was tottering to its fall, namely, that system of monopoly which had so long weighed down the energies and productive industry of the empire.

Mr. E. G. Cavendish declared himself a decided friend to what was termed the agricultural interest, and said, that unless it had been proposed to make some alteration in the commercial system of the country generally, and establish a more equal adjustment between the landed and manufacturing interests, he did not think it would have been either fair or politic to ask the agricultural interest to abandon the protection they enjoyed; but finding, that a great change was to be made in our fiscal regulations, that must materially benefit not only the landed interest, but all classes and interests in

the State, he certainly felt bound to give his support to her Majesty's Ministers. In voting, however, against the amendment of the noble Lord, and in favour of going into committee on the proposition of the Government, he did not consider, that he was at all pledging himself for this or that fixed amount of duty. The present was not the time for going into details. He would not now say whether or not, if any change took place, it ought not to be made to spread over a certain number of years. No one was more opposed to sudden changes in the existing system of commerce than he was, or less disposed to give a sudden blow to any large interests that had grown up under the sanction of the Legislature. But, however averse he might be to sudden changes, he could not consider the present deficient revenue without being willing to make up that deficiency, and more especially if it could be done without increasing the burdens of the people; and this, he thought, the measures proposed by the Government would accomplish.

Captain *Mathew* said, Sir, I must intrude for a few moments upon the time of the House, if it be merely to notice the speech of the right hon. the Master-general of the Ordnance on a previous night. The gallant Officer left the House so immediately after his speech (which was, I must add, far more to the question, and far more marked by real argument, than any speech from the other side of the House), that I have not had the opportunity of noticing it, and only do so now in his absence, lest a division coming on may deprive me of the opportunity. The gallant General read an advertisement respecting the meeting in Palace-yard of some societies, of whom he spoke as "banded by selfish motives to oppose the Government," and as "gladly seizing a public pretence to work their self-interested views, and to gratify party feeling against her Majesty's Ministers." Sir, I am proud to avow myself a member of the committees of three of those societies: I am a member of the committee of the Colonial Society; of the Society for the Protection of Agriculture; and a member of the West-Indian Committee, and I can only corroborate the gallant General's assertion of their union, whilst I must declare, that for the first time in my life, I have heard from his lips, that union for self-preservation, that the joining of men

in legal appeals to the Legislature, against a measure which is ruin to all that is near and dear to them, is deserving of censure; when, in a far different cause, and with different and not perhaps equally loyal sentiments, masses of people banded together for Reform, the noble Lord, by his letters and his words, held it to be matter of praise. Let me now congratulate the noble Lord, that he has introduced measures which have formed the bond of union to so many different interests, whom feelings of indignation, and the necessity of self-preservation, have aroused to strew some thorns upon his last bed of roses. But, Sir, I could not bring myself to give a totally silent vote upon this measure, for I stand in a peculiar position before the House respecting the right hon. Gentleman's proposal; for, as a West-Indian proprietor to some extent, inheriting, under grant from Charles 2nd, lands in the oldest colonies, I have ever warmly advocated the abolition of the slave-trade, and have voted, nay, canvassed in this House, for the termination of the apprenticeship. I was not led to this conclusion by the forged and creditable statements so sedulously circulated; I was not a believer in the shameful falsehoods so actively promulgated respecting the West-Indian proprietors and their treatment of the slaves; but I voted thus from an inherent detestation of the word slavery, coupled with the subjects of the Crown of England. I did so, I must add, in full reliance that the pledges which those great measures, and the recorded asseverations of all who took a part in those debates, gave me, that a fair trial to the national experiment should be given; and that the colonies should meet from England, the feelings and attachment that should mark a mother country's conduct to her first-born offspring. In these feelings, Sir, did the Legislature of the West-Indian colonies act. When these great, and, as I hold them, glorious acts, had passed your House (although against the opinions of the greater number of the colonists), they warmly entered into their spirit, and by an extended and expensive Church establishment, by the erection and endowment of schools and other institutions well fitted to advance their new social order, they evinced their desire to second your views, to the abandonment of their own, and their reliance upon the assurances of support and pro-

tection the British Parliament had so freely held out to them. They fairly warned you of the natural consequences of so brief a transition from slavery to freedom; you were prepared for it, and what they predicted has occurred—a great derangement of the social order ensued, and some time necessarily was requisite ere the cultivation of the colonial produce and rational order could be re-established. To the consequent diminution of their crops during this period, those who, as I must now term it, have the misfortune of possessing West-Indian property, have had to add the losses of two unexampled seasons of drought; and yet this is the season, this is the moment, that the noble Lord has selected to bring forward a measure which must utterly ruin the planter, and re-plunge the now happy labourer into semi-civilization and in misery. In a population now consuming 5*l.* per head of your manufactures, to the total amount of 4,000,000*l.*, there will not be left means to consume to the amount of one single guinea. I can neither pass over, nor pretend to follow, the beautiful speech of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies; every Member who had the pleasure of hearing him, must have admired that speech, and the more so, that so beautiful a superstructure should have been raised, by the noble Lord's talent, on so rotten a foundation. I must, however, thank the noble Lord for giving such testimony as he has done to my view of this measure; he has quoted an extract from the notes of Mr. Candler, when in Jamaica; he has exemplified the present thriving state of the labourers, and the habits of comfort they have adopted, and he tells us this is entirely owing to the high wages they receive: what better proof do I require than this, of the ruin the measure will cause? Our labourers are, thank God, too independent, too much habituated to comfort, to vie with the horrid "travail-work" of Cuba; and when the planter becomes, as he will at once, unable to supply wages, the negro will lapse into savage barbarism, amid the ruins of the once smiling homes of his former employer. I will not, Sir, delay the House by going into the various calculations I hold in my hand. The clear statement of my hon. Friend, the Member for Beverley, and the unanswerable speech of the noble Lord, the Member for Lancashire, has, I trust, convinced the House, at least, I am very

sure, convinced the country, that the short supply produced for two years by unavoidable causes is past, and that the natural rivalry between the East and West Indies will ensure an ample supply of sugar for the consumption of the country at a very moderate rate. These speeches have, I believe, fully disposed of the most plausible cry in the noble Lord's speech,—“cheap sugar for the people.” The noble Lord has wisely glanced lightly over a most important part of this subject, I mean, the stimulus which this measure will give the slave-trade. He has, however, strenuously ransacked his memory, to fix some odium on this side of the House, for the parts some Members might have taken during the debates on the abolition of the slave-trade. The noble Lord had one instance suggested to him, and eagerly seized it, and referred to the violent speech of a former representative for Liverpool. Let me reply one word only. Let me inform the House, that this Member was Colonel Tarleton, one of the most decided Whig partisans, that ever entered this House! It is, indeed, Sir, a debasing view of human nature; but the conviction forces itself upon me, when I see Members upholding this measure, and sneering and joking at any allusions to the slave-trade, from this side of the House. Members, too, who once so eloquently portrayed the miseries of the slave—who called upon their fellow-countrymen at the hustings to forswear the use of sugar, rather than consume the produce of the slave—who produced at an election, the figure of a negro in chains, to excite popular indignation against an opposing candidate. Sir, I say, the conviction forces itself upon me, that not by the real feelings of humanity, but for partisan objects, and by party warfare, the great measure of freedom was carried. Sir, the noble Lord, with perfect gravity of countenance, turned round to this side of the House, and accused us of acting for party purposes, and of offering a factious opposition to his measures. The noble Lord has evidently followed the precepts of a distinguished Irish senator, Sir Boyle Roche, who said, “The best way to avoid a danger, is to meet it plump.” The noble Lord accuses us first in fear and trembling, knowing, as he does, that without these walls, it has been written and said, I know not whether with truth, that he has conducted a factious defence, and that the

course he is now adopting is not in accordance with the spirit of the constitution. But the next, and the great argument of the noble Lord, is the deficit. To meet this, the Canadas, the West Indies, the shipping interest, the rising sugar cultivation of the east, and last, not least, the independence of the landowner, the comforts of the landholder, and the means of existence of the labourer—the agricultural interests of the empire—are to be sacrificed. And the noble Lord really believes the people of England so ignorant, so easily led by spouting radicals, as not to remember how that deficit was created! I will answer for it that he will, on an appeal to the people, find his error. When upon an electioneering experiment, and upon an exploded theory, the noble Lord proposed to give up a necessary, a productive, and a mildly felt source of revenue, did not the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Cambridge University, whose perfect knowledge of financial matters, in the opinion of this House and of the country, is only equalled by his rare habits of business, warn the noble Lord of the recklessness, the impropriety of his course, and call upon him to pause? And yet the noble Lord comes down smiling in triumph at his fault, as if he said—who will dare to be my successor now? The noble Lord appealed to the character of the Ministers. Let him try that with the country, since Sandwich he deems not a sufficient reply. You received the reins of office with a surplus; you have wasted that—you have put on ten per cent. on the assessed taxes—and yet you come before the House with a deficiency. You have unexampled distress at home—are you better abroad? After much waste of money and of life, you are obliged to acknowledge your expedition to China a complete failure, as if the responsibility of the selection of officers did not lay with the Ministers. You have war still in India. In America you have essayed to bark, before you were decided to bite; and by not insisting on Mr. M'Leod's liberation, and on the settlement of the boundary line, you have destroyed the prestige of British protection among your fellow-subjects on the frontier. Your colonies had a glimpse of happiness—you bring forward a measure for their ruin; in one where discontent had existed for years, an able and talented Governor (I allude to the Ionian Islands) had produced

harmony, and began to enjoy the popularity he deserves—you instantly recal him! Yes, my Lord, appeal to the country for the character of the Ministry! I listened with attention to the speech of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but, I confess, I could discover but one burden to his song—a querulous complaint, that the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, would not tell him what to do. So accustomed is he to see the country ruled in every good measure by the right hon. Baronet, that he now appears quite surprised, and fancies himself quite entitled to complain, because, having got into a scrape, the right hon. Baronet will not get him out of it. Sir, at the commencement of this debate, I had the honour to present a petition of no light importance, I mean, the petition of the Colonial Society; a society composed of near 1,200 gentlemen, proprietors, and connected with every colony of the empire. These gentlemen, Sir, composed of men of all politics, are determined to support colonial interests and rights, to the exclusion of every political feeling, and at a general meeting of that society, the determination was unanimous to oppose to the utmost these measures. The general belief was at that meeting, that had they returned Members to this House—had they possessed voices at a hustings to retain or discard a Ministry—they would not have been selected as the scapegoats for the noble Lord's bad legislation. But, Sir, the colonies are not, in this instance, unrepresented in this House. They are represented, on this occasion, by irresistible claims—by their claims on British honour, British humanity, and British justice. On these claims, Sir, they fully rely, and I feel convinced they will meet no disappointment. I trust, that this House will reject the proposals of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, and that to the consciousness of having introduced an unjust measure, her Majesty's Ministers will add the disgrace of having failed in their attempt to carry it.

Sir Benjamin Hall thought it his duty to offer to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government his thanks for their proposition on the present occasion; and, although he could not hope to add any novelty in the way of argument after six or seven nights of debate, he wished briefly to state his sentiments. He quite agreed with the other side of the House

that they were not bound to bring forward any scheme of their own as a substitute for the Ministerial plan; indeed, it would be extremely difficult for them to do so, because there was no alternative between the amendment of the commercial system now under consideration and a tax upon real property, a measure which hon. Members now in opposition had always strenuously opposed when in office. In the same way they could hardly recommend a loan, for that temporary mode of meeting an emergency they had already so often resorted to, that it would avail them no longer. The present was not an emergency of this year only, and it was therefore peculiarly necessary that more than a temporary remedy should be applied to it. I am anxious to express a hope as to the future conduct of my noble Friend (Lord John Russell) and his colleagues. This division, I am aware, must be against Ministers, and representing as I do one of the largest and most respectable constituencies in the empire, I may be allowed to observe that I trust they will act with firmness and decision in the crisis which is about to occur. If ministers are defeated, as they will be, I hope they will not separate without again distinctly bringing that great question before the House, which many, both in and out of it, wish to see discussed and determined—I mean the question of the Corn-laws. If, when they do bring it forward, they are beaten, as they necessarily will be if we look to the result of former divisions, they ought to take upon themselves the responsibility of following up the subject by an appeal to the sense of the country. They are bound to allow the country an opportunity of expressing its judgment upon a proposition so importantly calculated for its advantage. It is impossible to anticipate very exactly what may be the event of such an appeal. It is not for me to say, whether it will be in favour of or against Ministers; but the country ought to have the means of determining whether this moderate fixed duty shall be established, as the forerunner of a total repeal. The House will do me the justice to recollect, that when I formerly represented a constituency in an agricultural district, I always spoke the same language, and whenever the question of the Corn-laws was mooted or brought to a division, I invariably gave my support to any proposal for their partial or total abrogation. I am

desirous, in the first instance, that a fixed duty should be imposed, instead of the present sliding scale, as it has been termed, which has introduced a most fictitious system, to be followed by an ultimate and total repeal, in order that the people may obtain provisions at the cheapest possible rate. I do hope that her Majesty's Ministers will not leave the question merely in abeyance: having in a manly and becoming manner propounded these matters to the Legislature, they ought not to shrink from the responsibility of claiming support from the electors of the United Kingdom. They will be defeated here: let them at once then appeal to the country, and let them tell the constituent body, that having done what in them lay to accomplish a great good, it remains to be seen whether the people will support the Ministers in an endeavour to repeal the Corn-laws, and thereby to afford cheap provisions to those who stand so much in need of them.

Mr. Strutt said, that the hon. Member for Canterbury who had spoken early in to-night's debate, had at least been candid in his admissions. He had admitted the deficiency in the revenue, the distress of the working classes, and the depression of our commerce. He had also admitted that the measures proposed by the Government were calculated to supply the deficiency in the revenue, and at the same time to relieve the consumer and to promote the extension of our foreign trade. But he objected that we should be acting inconsistently with respect to our East-Indian possessions, if, after having lately conferred upon them the boon of equalizing the sugar duties, we were now to inflict upon them the hardship of exposing them to foreign competition. Now he (Mr. Strutt) contended that there was in neither case either a boon or a hardship. He considered the equalization of the sugar duties to have been an act of mere justice to the East Indies, and he maintained that the present measure was equally an act of mere justice to the British consumer. But the more favorite ground taken by the opponents of this measure had been, that it would have a tendency to encourage slavery in foreign countries, and this was the argument set forth in the resolution. He admitted that this was a most important question, but it was one which they must discuss on general principles. It might answer the

purpose of Gentlemen on the other side of the House on the present occasion to say, "We will put out of question slave-grown coffee, and slave-grown cotton, and slave-grown tobacco, we will allow all such articles to be imported in great and increasing quantities, whatever the effect may be in encouraging slavery and the slave-trade; but if we can only show that the importation of slave-grown sugar may have a similar effect, we will endeavour to raise the cry of humanity and serve our party purposes by forming a junction with a few (a very few he believed they would be) of those who had been the consistent opponents of slavery." But it was absolutely necessary to consider this question on general principles; and if we determined to exclude slave-grown sugar, we must, on the same principles, unless our humanity was a mere pretence, take measures for the immediate limitation and for the ultimate exclusion of all articles produced by slave-labour. Nay, we must go much further, and we must in consistency determine to refuse all commercial intercourse with countries in which slavery was allowed to exist; because it was the necessary effect of every bale of British goods imported into such countries to cause the exportation of some article of slave-grown produce, if not to this country, at least to some other nation with whom we were accustomed to trade. The question, therefore, arose, whether we were prepared to attempt the suppression of slavery by such means; whether by refusing to trade with other nations we were willing to inflict a great injury upon ourselves as well as upon them, with the view of coercing them into the abolition of slavery. He was himself convinced that any such attempt would be utterly fruitless, and that instead of succeeding in our object by such means, we should only excite in the minds of foreign nations feelings of hostility not only against the Government and the people of this country, but also against the principles which we were endeavouring to promote. He was satisfied, on the other hand, that if we desired to discourage slavery in foreign countries, we ought to endeavour to do so by extending our amicable and commercial relations with them, by using every means of infusing into the minds of those nations the same benevolent and humane feelings by which the people of this country had been actuated by taking every oppor-

tunity of promoting by means of treaties the mitigation and final extinction of slavery, and, above all, by showing to the people of those countries that, in putting an end to slavery, we had not merely performed a great act of justice and humanity, but that we had also consulted our own true and permanent interests. If, on the contrary, it appeared that in taking this step we had not only had to pay an immense sum under the name of compensation, but that we had also imposed on the consumer a permanent burden in the high price of sugar, and that we had also destroyed our trade with a great part of the world, we should thus be setting an example which was not very likely to be followed. Before he left this part of the subject, he wished to say a few words respecting the conduct of the West-India interest. When he recollected that those Gentlemen had formerly been owners of slaves and traders in slaves, and that many of them had been vehemently opposed to the abolition of the slave-trade and of slavery itself, and when he now saw them endeavouring to denounce the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, and those who acted with him, as guilty of inhumanity, he owned that he was filled with amazement, and that if he were to give full expression to his feelings, he might be tempted to use language which would be scarcely parliamentary. But perhaps it might be said, that reference should not be made to transactions which were previous to the abolition of slavery. Had, however, the conduct of those Gentlemen been consistent even since that period? Had they not witnessed the importation of slave-grown cotton, and tobacco, and rice, without even a murmur? But the moment that it was proposed to touch the article on which they were themselves interested, that moment all their slumbering humanity was aroused, and they seemed scarcely able to find words to express all the humane feelings by which they were influenced. He was not there to charge those Gentlemen with hypocrisy, or to deny the existence of that humanity which they now so loudly professed; but he would say, that those professions were no sufficient ground for denying a measure of justice and relief to the suffering people of England. Before he sat down he was anxious to express the satisfaction with which he had heard the announcement of the remaining portion of the finan-

cial scheme of the Government. He was more particularly rejoiced that they had proposed to substitute a fixed duty upon corn in the place of the present sliding scale, a system which he could only regard as one of fraud and delusion. His hon. Friend, the Member for Kent, had complained that the Government had not announced what they intended should be the price of corn under their new system. In making this complaint he thought that his hon. Friend was guilty of a fallacy which was very apt to pervade the reasonings of the supporters of the existing Corn-laws, namely, the assumption that it was within the power, and that it was the duty of Parliament to maintain the price of corn at some given amount. In his opinion, on the contrary, it was the duty of the Legislature simply to place all classes, as nearly as they could, on a perfect equality, with regard to fixed burdens, and to leave prices to regulate themselves. The hon. Member for Surrey had contended that the importation of foreign corn would not have any tendency to promote an increased exportation of our manufactures, and he had founded this argument on a reference to Parliamentary returns, from which it appeared that, under the existing system, our exports had not increased in those years in which we imported corn. Now, so far from thinking that the hon. Member had proved his case by this reference, he thought that he had adduced a strong argument against the present Corn-laws. It had been a subject of universal complaint, that under the present system the trade in corn was in the highest degree fluctuating and uncertain, and that importation could only take place in years of scarcity and commercial distress, when being unable to pay for the supply by the exportation of our manufactures, we were obliged to have recourse to an export of gold, thus deranging our circulation and causing the most extensive distress to all classes. If any additional argument had been wanting in this discussion against the present Corn-laws, he thought it had thus been supplied by the hon. Member for Surrey. In conclusion, he would express his satisfaction that her Majesty's Ministers had now committed themselves to these important measures in favour of free trade. He was confident that they were founded on sound principles, and he trusted that, in any course which the Government might

hereafter take, they would disregard all minor considerations, and would look only to promoting the success of those great measures on which the attention of the country was fixed. If they did so, he was satisfied that they would receive immense support from the people, and that the cause in which they had embarked must ultimately prevail.

Mr. M. Phillips had never felt greater confidence in any course than in that which was now recommended by Government, and upon this subject he believed there existed a perfect identity of feeling between himself and his constituents. No constituency in the kingdom had been more distinguished for the interest taken in the cause of negro emancipation, and two days ago, with the utmost satisfaction he had received from the Secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, in Manchester, a communication stating that only two individuals connected with that body had hesitated to come forward in favour of the proposition of Ministers. He had heard with great surprise the statements of the right hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, and believed him to be mistaken as to the sentiments of the operatives of the country. Those who required sympathy generally bestowed it with the greatest sincerity, and it seemed almost insulting the feelings of the operatives to talk of their dining on a dish of herbs. They had already too long had no better fare, not as a matter of choice, but of grievous necessity. The very existence of many hundred thousands might be said to be wrapped up in this discussion. He had originally been connected with a House in the Brazil trade, and it was his belief, after full inquiry, that the official return on this point, stating it at 2,600,000*l.* was considerably below the real value of the trade. It would be impossible to put down so extensive a commercial intercourse without an absolute act of non-intercourse; and if that were passed, the operatives thrown out of employ must necessarily be cast upon the parish, and become a burden to every species of property. It was, therefore, a matter of no small moment with reference to the new commercial treaty to be concluded in 1842; for, if goods were only to be sent out, and none brought home from Brazil, freights must be higher in proportion, and it would be detrimental, not only to the shipping interest, but to the merchant



and the manufacturer. It behoved every Government to take care that such an important branch of trade should not only be maintained, but promoted and improved. Sympathy was, at least, as much due to those at home as abroad, and he rejoiced that ministers had come manfully forward to meet the difficulties of the times, and by reviving and encouraging trade, to give employment to those who were ready and anxious to work. He had been requested by the hand-loom weavers of Manchester to ask for a grant of public money for the purposes of emigration, and he had dissuaded them from it, thinking that it would be difficult for those brought up to manufactures to adapt themselves to agricultural employments; but unless some alteration were speedily made in the condition of the people of this country, the Parliament would be driven by stern necessity to listen to their appeal to enable them to find in distant lands that work which they were not permitted to procure at home. He was convinced that their bad condition was mainly attributable to the state of our laws with respect to provisions, and if hon. Gentlemen opposite knew the real condition of the population in the manufacturing districts, they would think that others merited consideration as well as themselves—they would no longer support unequal laws, when the mass of the people were in abject misery, and they would no longer wish to uphold the present system for their own selfish interests. The noble Lord, the Member for Lancashire, had referred, with some earnestness, to the circular of two brokers of Liverpool. The opinions of these Siamese twins appeared to the noble Lord to be very important, and, upon their authority, the noble Lord stated, that if the Government measure passed into a law, there would be imported into this country wheat of a superior description to that generally imported from Ireland. Why, this superior quality of wheat was what the starving manufacturers of Manchester had long required. It had been the accusation against those Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House who had supported the Poor-law Bill, that their intention was to drive the people to the use of coarse food. He had always denied that assertion, but he now found that those who did desire to drive the people to food of a coarse and bad quality were

those who complained, that if the plan of her Majesty's Ministers were carried, the people would have an ample supply of the best description of food. If that were not the inference to be drawn from the noble Lord's reference to the brokers' circular, he could not conceive what it was. Her Majesty's Ministers had tried extra taxation—they had failed; and the course which they had now pursued, in proposing such measures as the present, gave them great honour. It was only during the last year or two that the evils of the Corn-laws had been generally acknowledged, but they had for years, to his observation, been producing an under-current of mischief: when, in the years 1834 and 1835, the country was stated to have been in the highest prosperity, and when the banking system had been carried to its greatest extent, the Corn-law was silently doing its work, and, unfortunately, we had been now brought to that situation that we could not compete with foreigners in the markets of the world: and when it was remembered that the quantity of our exports exceeded the amount of our manufactures in the home consumption, the bad consequence of this exclusion was apparent to everybody. All must allow that we ought, without delay, to free our commerce from all shackles, and he trusted that hon. Gentlemen opposite would not, by opposing these measures of her Majesty's Government, render themselves responsible for what he was sorry to believe would soon be the condition of the great mass of his countrymen.

Mr. Winston Barron differed from the proposal of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) upon six distinct grounds. He opposed it, first, because he believed, that if the House of Commons affirmed the resolution of the noble Lord opposite, however paradoxical it might appear to the new-born philanthropists opposite, it would tend to perpetuate slavery in every country in the world in which slavery now existed, for if we declared that the free labour of the West Indies, with the advantages of fifty per cent. protection, and 20,000,000*l.* grant, could not compete with slave-labour, what would other countries, which had not yet emancipated their slaves say when they were called upon to follow our example, but that the British Parliament had proved that it would be absurd for them to emancipate their slaves. If

they reasoned as men of common sense, they would say, "If the British colonists, with their advantages of fifty per cent. and their twenty millions, cannot compete with slave-labour, what are we to do—if we, who have no such advantages, emancipate our slaves?" Depend upon it, we should be fixing upon the black population in those other countries the perpetual bonds of slavery, if the resolution of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, were carried. He, therefore, said, as a friend of humanity, and as a sincere friend of the slave, that instead of passing such a resolution, they ought to adopt the proposition of the noble Lord near him (Lord John Russell), and send forth their *flat*, saying, "See what we have done for the West Indies, see how prosperous they are, see how well they can compete with your slave-labour, how successful they have been, come follow our example." Secondly, he opposed this resolution because he believed it would be highly injurious to the people of this country, if we did not change our tariffs and our present customs regulations. He believed that we had already lost the best markets we had ever had in Europe by the blind system of monopoly which we had pursued during the past twenty years. Was it not notorious that we had forced the whole of Germany to join the Prussian league, which had driven our manufactures out of every part of Germany? Was it not notorious that for every pound we now sold, we sent 20lbs. twenty years ago? We had obliged them to establish manufactories for themselves, and we had raised rivals at our very doors. At Chemnitz, and many other places, they had been constantly erecting manufactories, and were now becoming our rivals. Manufactures of iron, manufactures of hardware, manufactures of cotton, manufactures of woollen goods, manufactures of muslins, and manufactures of linens, had been springing up in all directions. And why? Because we would not take their raw materials. And thus we were ruining our own manufactures and starving our population at the same time; and it was because he considered that the resolution of the noble Lord opposite applied not to sugar alone, but to the whole measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that if it were carried it would abridge the comforts of the poor and deprive them of many of the necessities of life, that he

felt bound to offer to it his strongest opposition. He opposed it, also, upon another ground, which might appear to be a novel one to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and which might be received by a shout of derision, but which was, nevertheless, a real objection. He opposed the resolution, because if the noble Lord's resolution were carried, the Irish people would consider it a resolution to unseat the Government in which they placed confidence; it would shake the faith of that people in the British House of Commons, and tend more than anything else to that to which he believed hon. Gentleman opposite honestly objected; it would tend more to promote the repeal of the Union than any act that had been committed for the last thirty years. It was not a resolution merely upon sugar and upon slavery, but it was also a resolution to unseat the Government that had done justice to the Irish people. And he would not be acting fairly as an Irish representative, if he did not warn them before they raised seven or eight millions of people in arms against them. [*Ironical Cheers.*] Perhaps he had spoken figuratively, but they would raise a direful spirit of opposition against those Ministers who should occupy the benches near him, for if they supported their friends in Ireland, they would support those who had ever been the greatest enemies of the people of that country. Fourthly, he opposed this resolution because he detested monopoly in every shape and in every form. He detested monopoly in religion, he detested monopoly in politics, and he detested monopoly in trade and commerce beyond all; and he thought the resolution of the noble Lord opposite materially supported monopoly in its most disgraceful shape, when it affected the comforts of the poor. If this resolution were carried, it would tend to keep up the high price of sugar, and if there were deficiency in our own colonies, the price would rise to an enormous extent. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Newark, had said, that there would be just a difference of 1s. 6d. in favour of the people under the Government proposal; but the hon. Gentleman had forgotten that if it should be the will of Providence to affect our West-Indian colonies with any calamity, such as a wet season, hurricanes, or a rising of the population, there was no reason why the price of sugar should not rise to 60s. or 70s.;

and it would be impossible under the Government proposal that prices should ever reach such a height. The West Indies had no right to complain of the proposition of her Majesty's Ministers, for, though they had already received an enormous boon from this country, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed an additional protection of fifty per cent. What more could they, what more ought they to expect, unless they meant to have such a protection as would make this country pay more than their estates were worth? He, therefore, said that, because it aided monopoly, he trusted that the resolution of the noble Lord opposite would be scouted by a majority of the House, as it had been scouted by the people of this country. He reiterated the hope of the hon. Baronet, the Member for Marylebone, (Sir B. Hall) that her Majesty's Ministers would feel it their duty to appeal to the country upon these measures. He did sincerely hope that they would make that appeal, and especially after the first display they had seen of the feelings of this country: [*Opposition Cheers.*] he alluded to the display of feeling on the part of those people who had been all their lives opposed to slavery, and who had come forward honestly and openly, when there were slaves to be emancipated in our own dominions. He said, unequivocally, that those who had expressed these feelings, would not be deluded by the new-born zeal in favour of the blacks of Porto Rico or the Brazils. He was satisfied that it would be a complete failure, to endeavour to get up an anti-slavery cry against the Government. He opposed the noble Lord's resolution upon a further ground. He opposed it, because he believed it would tend most materially to shake the public credit, if these kinds of resolutions were to be made party questions. He believed that the public creditor would not be quite satisfied to see such discussions brought forward in that House, when it was notorious that they were brought forward for party purposes. When the public revenue was not equal to the expenditure, it was time for the public confidence to be somewhat shaken—it was time that it should be shaken, when it was seen that a large and influential body in that House, instead of assisting to raise the revenue, and enabling the country to seek new sources of industry, came down with a party motion, to prevent the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer from meeting the public demands. He was shocked to see men of such wealth and station, pretending to some character, coming forward and lending themselves to such party purposes; he did not think that it was an honourable way of meeting such a great question. Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheered when he said that he hoped there would be an appeal made to the country, and when he said that it might be judged from what had passed, what would be the result. He had understood perfectly well that cheer; it referred to what the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire (Lord Stanley), had alluded to when he taunted the noble Lord (Lord John Russell), with losing town after town. Now he must say, that he had thought this a very imprudent allusion. He would ask the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, 'whether he would be willing to row in the same boat with the parties returned for some of those towns for which hon. Members had lately taken their seats in that House? Was the right hon. Gentleman prepared to adopt the principles of the Chartists of Nottingham? Was he prepared to enter into a crusade against the Poor-law Bill? Yet, was it not notorious as the sun at noonday, that these were the subjects which had lately brought hon. Members into that House. Were these returns to be ascribed to the principles of old-fashioned Toryism, or were they in consequence of any professions of the right hon. Baronet's own principles? No; he had opposed the Chartists as much as the present Government, and it had been ascribed as a fault to his hon. Friends below him by the Chartists, that they had been prosecuted by the present ministers. He would ask, too, whether the right hon. Baronet had not openly and consistently supported the Poor-law Bill in that House as much as any one? [*Question.*] He was answering the argument of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, and he was telling the truth, though he knew it was not very palatable to hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Baronet was too candid not to allow that these were not principles on which he would like to see converts come into that House, and this, without reference to what he had seen in a letter that morning in the newspapers from a noble Friend of his (Lord Ranccliffe), in which there was one item that was rather equivocal, and in which they

were particularly told that a sum of 16,000*l.* had been lost, or stolen, or strayed, and that backed the declaration of the noble Lord, that votes were openly sold, coupled, too, as this was, with the scenes at Canterbury, and other places [A voice—"St. Albans"]. There had been strong assertions with respect to St. Alban's, but, as far as proof went, it had failed. These were not the kind of supporters which the right hon. Baronet would like to come into that House; he wished him joy of them, but he could not congratulate him, or the country, upon his receiving such support by such means. He looked, too, with great suspicion upon this newborn zeal for the slaves, because he had seen hon. Gentlemen opposite adhere to opinions, or abandon them whenever it suited their purpose. He recollected that, both in that House and the other, they had been violently opposed to Catholic emancipation; they had abandoned that opposition as they had abandoned the Corporation and Test Acts, when they found the opinion of the country to be against them. They had abandoned also their opposition to the Reform Bill, and were become its strenuous supporters, whilst the right hon. Gentleman at the head of their party had declared, not only that he was a strict adherent of the Reform Act, but that he would remedy and correct all proved abuses in Church and State. And he now saw those who had been the advocates of slavery in every shape, abandon that cause, and come forward as emancipists. Why what faith could the country have in a party that had thus given up its principles one after another? He supposed that the next thing they would see, would be the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, coming down to propose the abolition of ten or fifteen English bishoprics, as he had abolished the ten in Ireland. Would he be astonished at such a proposal? Not at all. He might also see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Pembroke, (Sir James Graham) coming down to propose the abolition of the duty upon corn. Would that astonish him? Not in the least. The right hon. Gentleman would be but returning to his first love. He should not be astonished at the introduction of such measures, because he had seen measures of as great importance in point of principle abandoned by that very party after they had been brought forward.

That party, in fact, wished to go further than the feelings of the country permitted, and he could not but view their new zeal for the abolition of slavery as being in truth a zeal for the assumption of office.

Mr. W. Williams was as anxious as any man for the abolition of slavery, and though he was impressed with the belief that this measure would give relief to the overtaxed people of this country, he should not support it if he thought it would in any manner retard the progress of negro emancipation. He was decidedly of opinion that the measure of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the reduction of duties on foreign sugars would have no influence on the state of the free black negro of the West Indies. He had formed that opinion from some documents which he held in his hand. He found that,

The average price of Muscovado or British colonial sugar, during the last eighteen years, from 1823 to 1840, according to official returns, was, per cwt.,.....33*s.* 1*d.*  
The average price of foreign sugar during the same period was ..... 24*s.* 6½*d.* } 37*s.* 1*d.*  
Proposed differential duty 12*s.* 7*d.* }

Thus showing that the British colonial sugar was sold at a less price than foreign sugar by 4*s.* 0½*d.* per cwt., or 12½ per cent.

The average price during six years, 1834 to 1839, when the Emancipation Act was in operation, was—

British colonial sugar ..... 36*s.* 10*d.*  
Foreign sugar ..... 23*s.* 10*d.* } 36*s.* 5*d.*  
Differential duty ..... 12*s.* 7*d.* }

Showing that colonial was sold for less than foreign sugar by 5*d.* per cwt.

"The average of seven years, 1834 to 1840, the whole period since the Emancipation Act has been in operation, was—

British ..... 37*s.* 2*d.*  
Foreign ..... 23*s.* 6*d.* } 30½*s.* 1*d.*  
Differential duty .... 12*s.* 7*d.* }

Showing that it was only necessary to sell British colonial sugar less by 1*s.* 1*d.* per cwt., or 3 per cent., to exclude foreign sugar from our market.

"Quantity of sugar imported.—

West India. cwt.	Mauritius. cwt.	E. India. cwt.	Without duty, average price per cwt.
1838—3,521,604	694,671	428,854	33 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i>
1839—2,823,931	612,586	518,925	39 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>
1840—2,202,833	545,009	462,836	49 <i>s.</i> 1 <i>d.</i>

Showing the produce of the West Indies was more in 1839 by sixty per cent. than in 1840; and that the average price of colonial sugar was higher by 50 per cent. in 1840 than in 1838, while the price of foreign sugar was, in 1840, 21s. 6d. per cwt., and in 1838, 21s. 3d. Looking at the state of the sugar-trade for the last twenty-nine years, he was decidedly of opinion that the proposition of the Government would not in the least degree affect the condition of the free black population of our West-Indian colonies. In the course of the debate a strong feeling had been manifested in favour of the negro labourer, but he could not help thinking that while hon. Members had thus expressed their opinions of this [portion of the question, they had most unwarrantably lost sight of the wants and the sufferings of the labouring population of our own country. It had been proved that the labourers of the West Indies were much better off than the free-born labourers of this country; for not only were their wages higher in amount, but their means of living more simple, and their opportunities of procuring food far more advantageous than those of the British population. The Under-Secretary of the Colonies said the blacks drink champagne, on which they will have to pay only 7 per cent. duty. The English labourer however, pays a duty of 120 per cent. on his beer, calculating the duty on malt and the profit on it of the malster, brewer, and publican. Our West-India colonies are principally supplied with provisions from the western states of America. The prices of the provisions principally consumed by the West-India free black at Cincinnati, on the Ohio, the city from which the produce of the western states was principally shipped, from whence there is an open continuous navigation down the Ohio and Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico and West Indies were as follows—

Flour—2½ dollars to 3 dollars per barrel of 196lbs. which will take 5 bushels of wheat—say 3 dollars at 4s. each ..... 12s. 0d.  
Reduced duty proposed by Mr. Labouchere ..... 2s. 0d.

14s. 0d.

Which is equal to 2s. 10d. per bushell, or ..... 22s. 8d. per quarter.  
The Freight, profit, &c. . . 11s. 4d.

34s. 0d. per quarter.

Price per average of English wheat in 1840, was 66s. 6d.  
" " in 1839 73s. 6d.

Showing the English labourer pays double the price for his bread to the black labourer. Again let them look at the price of other provisions,

Pork in the United States was, 1½d. per lb.  
Reduced duty proposed 4s. per cwt., or ..... ½d.

2d.

Add 50s. per cent. for freight, profit, &c. .... 1d.

3d. per lb.

The English labourer paid more than double this for his pork or bacon. Another important article was sugar. Now sugar produced by slave-labour in Brazil, was refined in this country, and allowed to be consumed in the West Indies by the freed blacks, by paying a duty of 7 per cent:—

Cost of fine refined sugar . . 33s. 0d. per cwt.  
Proposed duty 7 per cent. 2s. 0d.

35s. 0d. per cwt.

Or ..... 3½ per lb.  
Freight, profit, &c. 1½d.

5d. per lb.

In this country the same quality of sugar would cost 10d. to 11d. per pound. The black could buy his coffee, which was produced in the West Indies, and his tea, which paid a low duty, for less than one-half of the price in this country. The competition with our manufactures was principally from Switzerland, Germany, and the United States. He would therefore, show the rates at which the inhabitants of those countries bought sugar.

The Swiss buys his sugar at .... 2½d. per lb., or 23s. 4d. per cwt. little or no duty. The German at 2½d. per lb.

Duty within the German League 15s. per cwt., or ..... 1½d.

Cost ..... 4d.

The American buys his sugar for 2½d.  
Duty ..... 1½d.

Cost ..... 3½d.

The Englishman pays for his sugar, average price of 1840, 49s. 1d.

Duty 24s. 0d.—Total 73s. 1d. per cwt.  
Eight pence per lb. is .... 74s. 8d.

Showing that the Englishman pays for his sugar 200 per cent. more than the Swiss, 100 per cent. more than the German,

and more than 100 per cent. more than the American.

Duty on British colonial sugar ..	24s. per cwt.
Duty on foreign sugar ..	63s. per cwt.
Proposed reduction ..	27s.

36s.

Difference between the duty paid on foreign and colonial sugar 39s. per cwt. or 4½d. per lb. on sugar which cost 2½d. per lb."

It appeared from this statement that the negro labourer of the West Indies could buy his principal necessities of life at one-half the price paid by the English labourer, while the negro got on an average much higher wages than the English labourer. At Demerara the wages of the black labourer was about 4s. a day. Notwithstanding this inferiority of condition of the free born Englishman, produced principally by monopoly and taxation, as compared to the emancipated negro, all the sympathy was for the negro, while the distress and suffering of the English labourers and artisans were disregarded. He (Mr. Williams) was convinced that the proposed alteration in the sugar-duties would, by diminishing the price to the consumer, cause a very great increase in the consumption of that article, and that the advantage to the revenue would be far beyond what had been calculated upon by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He believed also that the same result would follow the proposed alteration in the corn-duties. It was notorious that our manufactures were all but excluded from many neutral markets which formerly were among our best customers by the cheaper productions of rival nations, to whom our restrictive system gave an undue advantage. Having recently visited Canada, he wished to make a few observations with respect to the timber-duties. He believed the alteration proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which would still leave a protecting duty, would not produce any material injury to that country. Looking at the state of the revenue, he could not see how hon. Gentlemen opposite could refuse to go into committee to consider the propositions of the Government, which he believed were calculated to meet the evil. Whatever opposition they might now meet with, they must become the law of the land, for the feeling of the country was so strong upon the question, that whatever party came into power they must be carried.

Mr. T. Duncombe said, that, judging by certain significations, and by the silence which had been studiously observed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, he thought that he was justified in assuming that there was a great anxiety on that side of the House, that this debate should be brought to a speedy conclusion, an anxiety not merely arising from the weakness of their case, but an anxiety also arising from an expectation which they seemed to entertain, that perhaps at the conclusion of this debate, those sweets of office which were not now within their grasp, might be within their reach. Knowing their anxiety, he would not now interpose between them and their fondest wishes, did he not feel confident that the longer this debate was prolonged, the better the people of England would understand the conduct and motives of the other side of the House, yes, the better would they understand, not only the conduct and motives of the House, but the better would they appreciate the resolution of the noble Viscount (Viscount Sandon) which was in opposition to their going into committee for the purpose of considering the best means, and the best way of meeting the exigencies of the case, in preference to imposing any additional burden upon the people; and not only would they appreciate the conduct of hon. Members on both sides of the House, but they would also set a value on the resolution of the noble Lord, which, he had no hesitation in saying, since he had had the honour of sitting in Parliament, was for its unparalleled inconsistency, its most barefaced duplicity, ay, and he would say its matchless hypocrisy, unrivalled in the records of the annals of the House. His immediate object in rising was, if possible, to catch a little of that sympathy which appeared to exist in the breasts of hon. Members opposite, for the population of foreign states. He wished to seek a little of that sympathy for the sufferings and distresses of our own fellow countrymen, which he would venture to prove to the House most distinctly. But before he proceeded to do so, he begged to be allowed to congratulate hon. Members opposite, on the fidelity with which they could keep a secret. Speaker after speaker on that (the Ministerial) side of the House had made the most urgent and he might say the most pathetic appeals to know, in the event of their defeating her Majesty's Ministers

on this occasion, what they would do ; but, with one exception, those hon. Gentlemen had been as silent as the grave. He need not remind the House, that that exception was the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn). He, to be sure, coquetted and played with the question ; he asked of her Majesty's Ministers " Why do you ask us this question ? You have no right to do so—you have produced the crisis and the difficulty, and you must propound the remedy." But he should like to know who had created the difficulty ? Had it arisen from any extravagant and unauthorised expenditure on the part of the Government, or from any misconduct on the part of the people ? What were the items by which this deficiency had been produced ? A great and overwhelming loss from the free communication by post which had been established. Had not that been authorised by Parliament—had it not met with the approbation of the whole country ? What was the other cause of the deficiency ? Did it not arise out of the deficiency of our excise returns ? Did it not arise from the improved disposition and temperance of the Irish people ? He was told, that there was a deficiency of half a million ; he wished to know, then, how hon. Gentlemen opposite meant to meet the difficulty, if they came into office. Did they mean to repeal the Penny Postage Act. Dared they raise the postage of letters ? Did they mean to promote inebriety in Ireland ? Did they mean to take half a million of money from the starving people of England in support of the so-called Church extension system ? The remedy proposed by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge was to leave things alone ; but he (Mr. Duncombe) said, that they would not be able to leave things alone long. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, objected to the time at which these changes were proposed, and said, that nothing could warrant such experiments but the most urgent case of necessity. Now, what he wanted to learn was, whether it was not an urgent case of necessity that foreign countries refused to admit our manufactured goods into their markets unless we received their produce ? Was it no urgent case of necessity that the whole mass of the industrious people of this country were starving and entirely destitute of the means of obtaining food ? Sacrifices must be made somewhere for the general good ; but the industrious millions of this country were now come to such a pass of misery and pri-

vation, that it was impossible for them to make any further sacrifice. The noble Lord, the Colonial Secretary, in his admirable speech on opening the debate, had ably painted the present state of the negroes of the West Indies. It might be alleged that that picture was overdrawn, but in support of it he had now great pleasure in quoting an authority which he was sure the House could not object to acknowledge. It was the report of an assembly the continuance of which he had two years ago voted in support of ; and they stated—

" We have never known an instance of parents putting their infant families to death, to save them from the protracted sufferings of starvation. It is not in Jamaica that unfortunate mothers outrage nature by the destruction of their new-born offspring, to avoid the cruel persecution of a hard-hearted and destroying morality ; nor is it under our laws that wretches commit suicide to escape the refuge which is provided for worn-out and aged industry. We have no corn-laws to add to the wealth of the rich, nor poor-laws to imprison, under pretence of maintaining, the poor. We cannot, as the English Parliament does, boast of a pauper law which has taken millions from the necessities of the destitute, to add to the luxuries of the wealthy."

The right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, the other evening, through ignorance, he supposed, for he would not accuse the right hon. and learned Member of indifference to the sufferings and feelings of the poor, said, that they would rather dine upon herbs than upon a stalled ox, under such terms as those proposed by her Majesty's Government. If there was ever a speech uttered calculated to produce disgust throughout the country, it was that of the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets. Let him look at the state of the poor in the neighbourhood of the borough which he represented. He would beg to read an extract from a report of what took place some weeks ago, in an application to Alderman Wilson at the Mansion House :—

" Miller, the relieving officer of the West London Union, said ' That he is frequently obliged to make his escape the back-way to avoid the violence of the poor waiting in front.' It was impossible the present state of things could continue."

And on the 11th of March he said—

" These destitute objects have become so exasperated and so reckless of life he was afraid they would commit murder."

The same day (11th March), Thwaites,

relieving officer of the City of London Union stated—

“That that union had relieved 6,000 destitute persons since January, and it was impossible to give an idea of the misery and distress of the able-bodied working men who came to him, by hundreds, actually famishing.”

This was the wretched condition of a large portion of the population in the centre of London, the richest city in the world; in the midst of luxury, gaiety, and plenty. To go now to Bethnal-green, the following melancholy statements presented themselves:—

“John Helyard, No. 1, Smart-street, Bethnal-green, weaver, with five children, the eldest seven years and a half; only one room, for which he pays 2s. per week, four yards and three-quarters in length, four yards six inches wide; four rooms form the whole house, in which there reside three families. Helyard and family have only straw to lie upon, stitched up inside old bagging; three old chairs, no saucepans, but one old kettle, in which this family boil their potatoes.—William Sclater, 6, Swan-street, weaver; five children, eldest eight years old; one room, only one chair, willow shavings for bed; no saucepans for use, but borrow of a friend; so badly clothed, wife has not been able in consequence to leave her room for some weeks.—William Field, 9, Derbyshire-street, Bethnal-green; three children; a weaver; one room, no work, no bed; the youngest nine months old, and it has not yet slumbered upon anything but old rags.”

In the district, also, which he had the honour to represent, he believed, that there was as much distress as in any part of London; but he would not take any instances from that district, but go to the borough of Marylebone, represented by a noble Lord, who, he believed, was not now in his place, or he would invite his particular attention to the following statements:—

“The worst districts of the metropolis have not been investigated, but the part selected was in the parish of Marylebone, not far distant from the centre of fashion, wealth, and splendour. The number of houses visited was 315; number of families inhabiting them, 915; number of families in which there were children, 578; number of children, 1,575. Out of the 578 families with children, 308 have but 1 room; 140 families have but 2, and there are 796 children who sleep in the same room as their parents. In Calmel-buildings, Marylebone, are 26 houses; average number of rooms in each house is, nearly 9; number of inhabitants, 882—consisting of 163 married couples, with 345 children; 66 widowers or

widows with 94 children; 21 single males; 30 single females, in all 280 families (in 26 houses); the average size of rooms, 11 feet 8 by 10 feet 6. In 156 of these families the parents sleep in the same room with the children, and in 132 families the youths and children, of both sexes and all ages, sleep together in one room.”

But these were not solitary instances; if they went to any of the manufacturing districts they would find the same melancholy state of things. What, for instance, was the state of the industrious classes in Birmingham, during the late severe winter? During that trying season subscriptions were raised by the inhabitants of that town, and a relief committee appointed, consisting chiefly of Conservatives, to bestow their charity. This relief committee, after affording succour to a great number of people, found themselves obliged to make a report, stating that

“They found in the distribution of the half of the sum collected above forty thousand individuals in such a state of destitution, as to be eager and grateful recipients of the amount of relief afforded, being less than one penny farthing per head each for five weeks. That these individuals were reduced to this extreme suffering and degradation, by causes over which they had no control, and from which therefore they possessed in themselves no means of escape. That not more than one family in five, could by any possibility make provision for the vicissitudes of trade.”

Nevertheless, the committee finding their labours to be hopeless, gave up their trust, and ceased their labours. Upon this a committee of working men, in the employment of Mr. Clutton Salt, addressed a letter to the chairman of the relief committee, the Rev. Mr. J. Garbutt, in which they said:—

“We could not bring ourselves to believe, till assured that it was so by the secretary, that after deliberately vouching for these facts, the committee could have concluded abruptly its labours, leaving forty thousand individuals who were so destitute as to be grateful for the relief afforded by one penny farthing per head per week, with whose miseries they had just become personally acquainted—we could not believe that at such time, and under such circumstances, they would abandon these their Christian brethren to their fate without one word of hope. . . . We very respectfully remind you, Sir, that every minister of the borough was a member of that committee, and is responsible for its acts; and we represent to you, that when they found in the wealthiest country in the world such a mass of



distress, the whole amount they could collect was so dis-proportioned to the poverty, that the relief they were able to offer was so small, as to be rather a mockery than a benefit. . . . Unfortunately while Christian ministers and Christian congregations have offered the words of praise and prayer in the temples, they have allowed oppression and misery to poison and destroy the very life of their humble brethren, and therefore, the blessing of God has not been upon them, and discord and danger surround and threaten the altar. We pray that this state of things may cease. . . . We remind you that there can be no real difficulty in the case; that each of the destitute you have vainly attempted, by almsgiving, to relieve, could, if his industry were set free, produce five times more than he would want to consume. United with your congregations, you have the power to save."

He would now beg the attention of the House whilst he read a letter, which he had received from a gentleman of Burton-on-Trent, dated the 11th of May:—

"Sir, It may be interesting to you to know that only last week four large manufactories in this place, worked by Messrs. John and Robert Peel, have been abandoned, and nearly five hundred people thrown out of employment without the most distant chance of their being resumed. These once flourishing works have sunk under the general decline of the profits of this great branch of business, notwithstanding the rate of wages has to the last been materially lower than in the Lancashire districts. Surely, this is only a sign of the times, and calls for a speedy remedy.—I remain, Sir, your obedient servant"—

It was notorious, that that numerous class, the hand-loom weavers, were earning on an average less than 1*d.* a-day per head. The state of the poor people of Loughborough and its neighbourhood, was thus described by an eye-witness:—

"They are principally employed in the making of stockings. Their average earnings not more than 7*s.* per week, when in full employment. Are frequently out of work, and on half-work, and when on half-work their employers charge them full expenses the same as if they were fully employed, it being the practice to pay for the use of the frame or loom so much per week, so that they frequently work for very little more than the expenses; so that they are half fed, half clothed, and their houses are destitute of furniture. Two persons went over from Loughborough to Sheepshhead, on Monday, April 26, 1841, and found numbers of dwellings without furniture and in the most wretched state. An individual of the same place was with me on May 1, who stated, that himself and son, aided by his wife had earned that week, at first hand 9*s.*; had to pay frame rent, 1*s.* 6*d.*; for needles, 3*d.*;

the wife did the seaming, or he would have had to pay for it being done; besides the above, he had candle to find, to see to work by. He stated, that he had been employed in his branch sixteen years; that when he received 23*s.* per dozen, he could give satisfaction, but now that he is reduced to 5*s.* 6*d.* per dozen, he cannot please his employers. This is generally the case. The masters frequently make reduction on the most frivolous pretence, so that the men do not know what they shall have till they receive it, and go before their employers with fear and trembling. I was informed by a respectable female, that a woman brought her work to her employer; he sent it to be inspected by the mender, and sent the woman home without her money, and she had to be dependent on the kindness of friends, for food for the family over Sunday. On Monday she came again, being an additional six miles; she saw the mender, who said they were all right, and as she was a poor woman, she should make no charge for inspection, but the master took 1*d.* per pair off. From these circumstances and others, the people are in a state of desperation. About a fortnight ago, a poor man, who had been in comfortable circumstances, but reduced, and had been receiving 2*s.* 6*d.* per week from the parish, but his wife dying, they were going to reduce his relief. He hung himself in despair. I could go on, but my heart sickens at writing. But I hear and witness such things that is sufficient to make a wise man mad."

Another account he would read from two gentlemen of the Society of Friends, dated Loughborough, 1st May, 1841. It ran thus:—

"Friend—We take the liberty of sending you the condition of the frame-work knitters and shoemakers of Loughborough, earning from 4*s.* to 7*s.* per week; the average of their families is from five to seven in number. We toil from seven o'clock in the morning, till ten at night, and when we leave off, we have to go to a wadding of straw. The pale cheeks of our wives, and the twisted limbs of our offspring, denote that we are deprived of every comfort that God ordains. Oh, shame upon the Government of England!"

A most sickening incident was given in the letter of another correspondent, from the same place, dated May 10, 1841, from which the following was an extract:—

"I send you these few lines, which I can testify on oath. A few days ago, my son had a gathering in his finger; he was ordered a bread poultice, which after being on one day, it was thrown out of the door, four poor children came by, picked it up, quarrelled which should have it, and eat it as voraciously, as if they had not tasted food for a week."

In Huddersfield, the same distress and  
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misery prevailed; his informant stated as follows:—

"There are, in the townships of Haithwaite Marsden, and Scammonden, thousands of persons employed in weaving what are called ke-senets, a mixture of cotton and wool; they travel on foot, in all weathers, for the material—sometimes as far as ten and eleven miles, and sometimes are disappointed in obtaining any; when they do, they carry it home on their backs, and weave at it for fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen hours per day. When wove, they carry it back again, and, after all their toil, this (White) independent labourer cannot average more than from 3s. 6d. to 7s. 6d. per week, for the sustenance of himself and family, who live in hovels, without furniture, huddled together, lying, not in a bed, but upon a little straw or shavings, like pigs or cattle, not having one-fourth of the food necessary to their support; and as to the subsistence of their wives and children, they can only obtain it by breaking the law in begging from village to village or house to house, for which they are constantly punished."

In Nottinghamshire, the same state of things was found, without any circumstances of mitigation. He would beg to read a passage from a circular issued by the rev. Mr. Goodacre, the perpetual curate of Sutton-in-Ashfield, dated March 2, 1841, and which that rev. gentleman declared, under his hand, rather under than overstated the amount of misery in that district:—

"The distress existing amongst the mechanics of Sutton-in-Ashfield is now unparalleled, and appears yet increasing; and although the poor-rates are very heavy, so as to be bringing the tradespeople (who can do very little business) to a level with the operatives, the families of the poor are nearly naked, and their meagre looks show they are suffering hunger. The houses exhibit such squalid poverty and misery, as none but eye-witnesses can conceive. Instances there are, not a few, where one bed of chaff or straw serves for a man, his wife, and three children; and that bed without any blanket or warm covering. In short, the sufferings are such as, whatever the cause, should, if possible, be removed."

The Gentlemen of Scotland would tell the House similar facts of the state of the poor in their part of the empire, but he (Mr. Duncombe) would not go into those districts. He would only read one more statement; it was an extract of a letter, addressed to the Duke of Wellington, by a gentleman who was no Chartist, or Liberal, but a high Church and State man, Mr. Oastler. This gentleman entered

into the following distressing and revolting particulars:—

"I can scarcely trust myself, whilst I write the following:—It is almost, nay, it is actually incredible; but nevertheless, it is true—absolute fact—which can be proved by incontrovertible evidence:—Not six miles from this place, on the edge of the Moors, a cow dying of dysentery, is considered by the poor weavers and their families as a honey-fall—a God-send! She is called by them a 'green tail.' I will not trust my own description of this horrid fact, I will merely transcribe the notes of a friend, which notes I know are true. In the course of our inquiry into the state of the labourers, one of our questions was—'how often do you get butcher's meat?' In the neighbourhood of Dean Head and Scammonden, the general reply was, 'never nobbut when th' green tail butcher gets a ka-ah' (cow). This expression, of course, required explanation, which was in the following terms:—'When a farmer had gotten a sh—tering ka-ah, and wen t' doctor sed shu'd dee, they sent for'th green tail butcher, to sell her tull him: then a lad wur hired to drive her past sich and sich hauses; they all knew wat hit meant; an then began ta make a collecshun i' their folds; an if 5s. cud be rais'd, a whole quarter wud be brought in't t'fold, to be devidid amang t'foulk, but if they cudent raise 5s. they tuk wat they hed, and gat a lump of hur, for thur brass.' Now, this was all the butchers' meat they had tasted all the year round, except now and then, when they could afford a few pence for 'su'it' to boil with their 'pot'ates.' The landlord of the public-house (who had not been long there) related the following anecdote. He told us, 'That he had once allowed a 'green-tail' to be killed in his mistall, but he would never allow another to be killed on his premises, no, not for 50l.' He said, 'the poor people could not wait until she was cold, that they 'slapped' their knives into her before she was stiff—that they cut collops off, and held them a short time before the fire, and actually devoured them before they were half 'fried'—such 'savage work,' the landlord said 'he never saw before!' And is this a prosperous state of trade? These are manufacturing labourers—hard-working hand-loom weavers. This is an English scene—a scene in the thriving parish of Huddersfield."

Yet this was the people, scrambling for carrion, of whom the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets said, that they would prefer dining on herbs to feeding on a fatted ox. No! in justice, let not this be pretended or exacted. No, when he saw all the officers of high and low station in church and state giving up part of their emoluments to help to feed their starving fellow-creatures—when he saw the owner of Brazilian mines recoiling

from the touch of Brazilian gold, brought to the surface by the hands of Brazilian slaves—then, and not till then, should he believe, that this happy millennium of charity and disinterestedness had arrived ; but not till then would he call upon the toiling people of this country to recoil from the use of sugar brought from Cuba and Brazil. He knew the strong phalanx of party interests and petty motives which were arrayed against her Majesty's Ministers on the present occasion ; but he hoped they would not give way—that they would not despond. Let, them recollect, that when the noble Lord, now at the head of the colonial department, first announced the Reform Bill in this House, he was greeted with the same shouts of derision as those which greeted his announcement respecting the Corn-laws the other evening. Yes, the same horrible boroughmongering howl was heard on that as on the present occasion. Gentlemen opposite flattered themselves, that they had worked a great reaction ;—thanks to their plentiful bribery, and the science of intimidation which they had so perseveringly studied, they had succeeded in carrying a few elections of late, till the country began to forget that a Reform Act had ever been passed, and to wish, that this House would act as if no such measure had ever been framed. But let not the Conservatives flatter themselves that any reaction had taken place in their favour amongst the people of this vast empire. No, a great revolution was going on in the mind of men, but it was no revolution in their favour. The people were busy educating themselves and reflecting upon the miseries of their condition, and were daily contriving the means of freeing themselves from the miserable and degraded state to which the base policy and class legislation of former Governments had reduced them. He called upon Gentlemen opposite to pause in time—to beware how they persevered in their selfish views—to take care that they did not go on till they produced a state of things in which not only the happiness of the poor, but the safety and quiet of the rich should be sacrificed. For his part, he should only add, that he should cordially vote in favour of her Majesty's Ministers upon this question ; indeed, he had seldom given a vote with more pleasure than he should do on the present occasion, not only on account of the inconsistency, dis-

honesty, and hypocrisy of the resolution proposed from the other side of the House, but because he considered, that the principle of that resolution, if carried, would be calculated to inflict increased misery upon the industrious millions of this country.

Mr. *Briscoe* said, that the present measure was a very important one, not only on account of the increase of national income which it was proposed to make up by means of it, but on account of the encouragement which it was expected it would give to the industrious resources of the country. He thought, therefore, that when the suffering millions of England, Scotland, and Ireland, were all concerned in the issue of this debate, the subject should be most impartially and patiently discussed by the House. The fact was, we had arrived at a very alarming crisis as respected our manufacturing and commercial condition ; and unless some change were speedily adopted, the most sad and ruinous consequences must ensue. As an independent Member, he must say the advisers of the Crown were unjustly accused of a want of integrity and sincerity. It appeared to him, that had they acted with less integrity and less reliance on the justice of their cause, they would not at once have developed all the measures now before Parliament. He agreed with those who said this was not a party, but a national question. He trusted the nation at large would be appealed to ; that they would lay aside their party feelings, that they would be enabled to resist corruption and intimidation, and that they would perform their duties fearlessly on a question which involved the happiness of all, even from the sovereign on her throne to the humblest of her subjects.

Mr. *Muntz* said, that it appeared rather presumptuous in a young Member like him to offer himself to their notice, at so late an hour. He had understood in the beginning, that the debate was to be a sugar debate—a sugar debate, and nothing else ; but as so many hon. Members had digressed from the subject, and he had taken such a large dose of the philosophy of others in its course, he trusted, that he would be permitted to administer a little dose of his philosophy to the House on the present occasion. When he heard the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies make the statement of the duties he intended to propose, upon the importation

of corn, he was tempted to exclaim with Talleyrand, "*Voilà le commencement de la fin*;" for, most certainly, was then destroyed, at one fell swoop, all the unnatural system of the last twenty-five years; a system so extraordinary, so preposterous, and so unnatural, that the historian who writes upon it would not be believed by posterity. He referred to those two opposing laws—the one having for its object, to make corn twice the price of the rest of Europe—the other, keeping money at the same price as the rest of Europe. It was now quite impossible that these laws could longer continue; and it was, therefore, necessary, either that all prices should fall to the level of money, or that the value of money should be raised up to the necessary price of corn. Whether the Government had decided rightly in adopting the former principle, remained to be proved; but if they thought so, they were bound to carry out their principles entirely. He considered it necessary to recal to the recollection of the House what passed upon the budget of 1840 being introduced. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, then showed the necessity of imposing new taxes, and proposed an additional per centage, with the view of saving new machinery. He also stated, that the new taxes would only be temporary, for that the resources of the country were unimpaired, and the elasticity it possessed would speedily remove the momentary pressure; these sentiments, he recollected, were echoed from the other side of the House by a right hon. Gentleman, upon which he ventured to state that he differed in opinion with the right hon. Gentleman; that he believed, not only that the new taxes would be permanent, but that the next budget would show a greater deficiency, and that the elasticity would be found to be an idea that would never be realised. The House might now judge who had been right, but he must say, that seeing how the hon. Gentleman had deceived himself last year, he had great suspicion that he would do the same this year; and he had great doubts of the plan proposed effecting the object, and giving the increase of revenue required. No one was more ready to admit the necessity of revising the import duties than he was, for he perfectly agreed in the absurdity of such high duties as made smuggling profitable, to the injury of the

country, and without benefit to the revenue; he also saw plainly the impropriety of its being possible for coffee to be sent from Brazil to the Cape, to save 5d. per pound in the duty; and in the plan of allowing slave-grown sugar to be refined in bond, and re-exported to our colonies, at a less price than was paid there for raw sugar; but he did not see how the intended revision was to materially increase the revenue. The great question for consideration was, what caused the pressure upon the labouring classes, and the consequent deficiency in the revenue; and he attributed both to having contracted an enormous debt, and doubled the landed rental, upon a circulation depreciated 50 per cent., which was now attempted to be paid in a circulation which was partly appreciated to the old standard. He did not object to hon. Gentlemen on the other side endeavouring to keep up their rents, it was all very natural that they should do so; but he objected to the manner in which they attempted to realise their wishes. There was all the difference between a high price of corn and a price obtained by an abstract law, and he could not admit the justice of keeping up the present average price of corn, unless by such a principle as would enable the consumer to keep up his wages in the same proportion. The distress of this country arose from the enormous debt; and the problem to be resolved was, whether the income could pay the interest on that debt and the expenses of the country with low prices, when reduced to the level of the present gold standard. He did not see how it could do so; the poorer classes were at the lowest point of poverty, and for the last three years the merchants and manufacturers of the country had been living on the principal, having made little or no profit; and although the list of bankrupts might not appear so large as formerly, the number of compositions and assignments exceeded anything that had before been seen. He could entirely corroborate the statements made of the dreadful distresses of the poor, by the hon. Member for Finsbury; and he firmly believed, unless some change was speedily made, that their privations would rapidly increase. There existed three great interests in this country at present—the landed, the moneyed, and the labouring. The last was in the utmost misery, and should be relieved. So far he agreed with the Go-

verment, but he did not altogether approve of the plan they proposed, because it placed the burden entirely on the first, leaving the moneyed interest entirely untouched. He did not see why the land should suffer, and money not. The Government proposed a duty of 8s. per quarter on foreign corn. What would be the effect of it? He would take the House back to 1790 to see, for since that date, such had been the indirect operation upon prices by the alterations in the monetary system, that it was quite impossible to make correct comparison with any later dates. From 1700 to 1790 the ounce of silver and the bushel of wheat were on the average of equal value throughout Europe, including this country, and the same proportions now remained, excepting in this country. At that time wheat could not be imported into this country when under 48s. per quarter, which was the same as the now proposed protection of 8s. per quarter. There was then also a bounty of 6d. per bushel upon the exportation of corn when at 40s. per quarter, for which bounty upwards of 1½ millions sterling was paid in ten years, yet with all these advantages, the average price of wheat was only 4s. 11d. per bushel. Now, he asked the House, if by adopting the proposal of the noble Lord, and returning to the same state of things as existed before the year 1790, the same Corn-laws, the same standard of money, the same in all respects, except having an additional thirty millions of taxes to pay per annum, we should not necessarily have the price of corn the same as at that period? In his opinion, one such practical illustration was superior to all the theory in the world. But suppose we had not, and the noble Lord's calculations were right, when he reckoned that the average price would be 60s.; if that were so, what was the poor man to get by it? That had been the average price for the last twenty-five years. Say what they would, the object of the measure was to reduce wages. The only way in which the repeal of the Corn-laws, even to the extent proposed, could assist trade was by the reduction of wages, enabling the manufacturers to make their goods at lower prices. That was one part of the plan, but then it was contended, that this measure would not reduce the price. That he could not understand, one of the parties must be wrong. If the price of corn were reduced, as he

contended it would be, it would take away all the rentals; if not, it would confer no benefit upon the manufacturers. That celebrated paper the *Times*, had brought forward in a leading article on what he said last year, viz., that he believed, that the repeal of the Corn-laws, if adopted alone, without other measures, would not be beneficial to the country; he said the same now, but he complained of the *Times* that they had quoted only a part. He had been charged with inconsistency, and they ought to have stated, that at the same time he said, that the present state of things could not be continued, and that, at the first step, he voted against the Corn-laws, which, as an abstract legislative measure, could not be maintained upon sound and honest principles. When the finances of the country and the national faith were mentioned, it was an unnatural thing that money should be left out. He would refer again to the fact, that the intention of the Corn-laws was to keep corn at 10s. per bushel when its natural level was 5s.; and as it regarded the working classes, the intention of the present measure was to reduce the price of corn to the continental level, and wages, of course, with it. In his opinion, therefore, if it were necessary to enable the agricultural interest to obtain rents, taxes, and profits, that wheat should be maintained at the average of the last twenty-five years, or 7s. 6d. per bushel, the equitable plan would be to keep the ounce of silver in due ratio, as it was up to 1790, which would enable the labouring classes to raise their wages in the same proportion. The noble Lord thought, that his 8s. duty would not have that effect, but he said, that at that duty the price could not be kept above the continental level. If the landed interest thought they could bear that, all very well, but he could not fairly and honestly vote as he intended, for Ministers, without pointing out to hon. Gentlemen opposite the difficulties they would be in. There was no inconsistency in his giving that vote. He explained it as he did before. The abstract law was not justifiable, in his opinion, but they were quite distinct questions, whether the landowners should have direct protection by Act of Parliament or by other means. A great deal had been said about national faith, and an extraordinary sort of national faith it was. They had contracted a large debt by depreciating the value of the cir-

culation fifty per cent. Could they have incurred that debt if they had not done so? They had doubled their rentals. Could they have done that if they had not depreciated the circulation? They considered it a matter of national faith to pay that debt by taxing the working classes. They had been paying the moneyed interest in a different standard, which had given them far more than their just claims, they had also hitherto partly supported the position of the landowner by an abstract Corn-law, but they had done nothing for the working classes, and now they proposed to relieve the working classes at the expense of the landowners, so that their national faith had been to take from the working classes what they had no right to take, and now it was to take from the landowners what they had no right to take—for why, he could not understand. They had found the end of taxing labour, and they were now going to find the end of taxing land, but he thought the landed interest was too prudent to allow anything of the sort, to permit themselves to be made the scapegoats for a set of people, for whose sake all interests had been sacrificed; it was nothing more than to give over the fee simple of land to money, that was the end of it. He did not want them to believe him then, but the result would prove, that he was right. When he had talked upon these subjects to hon. Members, he had been answered, that his plan was “a little shilling plan,” but he said, they must have a little shilling—they had doubled their rentals, they had depreciated the circulation, what right had they to a large shilling? Where was the difference? They gave a bushel of corn worth 5s. for 7s. 6d. they gave their little bushel, and he would give his little shilling—he would give his shilling for eighteenpence. The fact was, the case wanted investigation, for the true bearings of it were very little understood. It was easy to throw out sneers about “a little shilling,” but he could assure the House his interest was so divided, that he could have no desire except for the general good. He saw that the thing was out at elbows. The present state of things could not continue, it would soon be impossible to keep the poor people in peace and order, and as to the national faith, he had thought it his duty to make those observations. It would be infinitely more honest to impose a general property tax, than to repeal the present Corn-laws, for by that

means they would tax not the land only, but money also. One class he ought to have mentioned. A considerable portion of the working classes, which had derived benefit at the expense of the manufacturing classes—he meant that class who worked for home consumption, and had little connexion with foreign trade, for there had been very little reduction in their wages for twenty-five years. Now, that class ought to return part of that gain, and a proper regulation of the money would affect them also. But, next to that plan, unquestionably a property tax was to be preferred, which would take away from the labouring classes the pressure of indirect taxations, and would, besides, furnish a powerful argument against the cry for universal suffrage. He was not an advocate for universal suffrage, he doubted if it would really be of advantage to those who asked it, but he was quite of opinion, that a very large extension of the suffrage would be of great advantage to society, and the claim was much stronger when it was urged by those who bore a great share in the taxation of the country. The pressure upon those classes was now very great, and they had a right to complain, and they would do so as long as the common necessities of life were not easily within their reach. He had no party to please, he had no interest to consider, but he thought he was only doing his public duty in taking the part in the debate which he had done, and he thanked the House for the attention with which it had heard him.

Debate again adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, May 18, 1841.*

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Received the Royal assent:—Exchequer Bills (11,000,000.); Excise Collection and Management; Slave Compensation; Lease and Release; Banking Partnerships; Court of Exchequer (Ireland); Dublin Wide Streets (No. 2); Sir Walter Scott's Monument.—Read a second time:—Criminal Justice; Quarter Sessions.—Read a third time:—Frivolous Suits.

Petitions presented. By Lord Portman, from Bath, against Church Rates.—By the Earl of Yarborough, the Earl of Haddington, Lord Stradbroke, the Marquess of Downshire, and the Earl of Winchelsea, from the Isle of Wight, places in Scotland, places in Ireland, Kent, and other places, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Earl Fitzwilliam, from Yorkshire, against the Corn-laws.—By the Marquess of Breadalbane, from Scotland, in favour of the Principles announced by her Majesty's Government with regard to the Import Duties.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, May 18, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time :—Entails (Scotland).

Petitions presented. By Mr. Dugdale, from various places in Warwickshire and Derbyshire, by Sir J. Tyrrell, from several places in Essex, by Mr. Packe, from places in Leicestershire, by Mr. D'Ismeli, from Maidstone, and by other Members, from a number of places, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Brotherton, from Salford, Manchester, and other places, by Mr. Strutt, from Derby, and from Agricultural villages in Derbyshire, by Sir H. Parnell, from Dundee, by Mr. Ewart, several, from places in Lancashire, by Sir J. Hobhouse, from places in Berkshire, by Mr. Hume, from Hammersmith, Brentford, and Bolton, by Mr. Busfield, from Bradford, by Lord Morpeth, from places in the West Riding of Yorkshire, by Lord Howick, from places in Northumberland, by Mr. Villiers, Sir G. Strickland, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Baines, and other hon. Members, from a great number of places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws, and for a Reduction of the Sugar and Timber Duties.—By Mr. Greene, from Lancaster, by Mr. Walter, from Nottingham, and other places, against the New Poor-law, and against the Poor-law Amendment Bill.—By Mr. Hawes, from Lambeth, and other places, and by Mr. T. Duncombe, from places in Norfolk, for the Release of Political Offenders.—By Mr. Miles, from places in Somersetshire, by Mr. W. Duncombe, from places in Yorkshire, by Mr. Darby, from places in Sussex, and by Mr. R. Palmer, from a place in Berkshire, for Church Extension.—By Sir R. Bateson, from Down, against Church Patronage (Scotland).—By Mr. Kemble, from places in Surrey, against further Grants to Maynooth.

MISPRINT IN PARLIAMENTARY RETURNS.] Mr. *Goulburn* said, that in the return of the communications made by the colonial agents to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the subject of the sugar-duties, printed for the use of the Members of that House, there was either an inaccuracy in the copy or else a misprint. They were made to say, that there would not be a sufficient supply of sugar during the next year, but the rest of the paper plainly showed, that this must be a misprint, and that it ought to have been that the supply would be sufficient. He should not have noticed this had not the right hon. Gentleman opposite made that mis-statement the foundation of his argument last evening. Under these circumstances he would ask the hon. Gentleman opposite if in the original document the West India agents had not stated, that there would be an adequate supply of sugar during the next year?

Mr. *Vernon Smith* said, it certainly was a misprint, which was owing to no inadvertence on the part of the Colonial office. A similar return had been printed for the House of Lords, which was correctly printed, and as the printer had printed the return for that House from the return ordered for the House of Lords, it had not

been sent to the Colonial office for correction, and hence the error had arisen.

Sir *C. Grey* had understood from the document printed for the use of the Members of that House, that the supply would not be adequate. At the same time he must confess that, from the context of the document, the reading had appeared to him to be rather ambiguous. It seemed to him, upon reflection, that the West India agents might be speaking with reference only to the West Indies. It was notorious that the supplies from the West Indies would not be sufficient.

Subject at an end.

SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS  
ADJOURNED DEBATE (EIGHTH DAY).]

Mr. *Sheil*: The department with which I have the honour to be connected, will afford me a justification for interfering in this debate; it has been protracted beyond the ordinary period of the duration of our debates, but not to a period incommensurate with the importance—the incalculable importance, of a subject upon which, in the exercise of their appellate jurisdiction, the people of England must ultimately decide. I shall not trespass upon the indulgence of those who surround me, or upon the forbearance of those to whom I am opposed, at any inappropriate length. I shall confine myself to the resolution of the noble Lord, and do my best to avoid the example of those who have wandered far away from it, and who have indulged in dissertations not more mysterious to their auditors than to themselves. I shall, Sir, in the first instance, address myself to that branch of the question in reference to which, the people of England, the virtuous and humane people of England, feel a deep and a most honourable concern. If, Sir, to the progress of the slave-trade, by an exorbitant differential duty between colonial and foreign sugar, any effectual impediment were interposed—if, notwithstanding that exorbitant differential duty, the slave-trade were not successful to an extent which has been stated, with too much justice, in the course of this debate, to cast a stain upon christian Europe,—if to slave-grown sugar every port upon the continent were not thrown widely and indiscriminately open,—if with the produce of slave-labour in many forms—coffee, cotton, tobacco—our own markets

were not glutted,—if we were not ourselves the importers, the refiners, and the re-exporters of slave-grown sugar to the continent, aye, and to our own colonial possessions, to an enormous annual amount, I am free to confess that with regard to the propriety of making a reduction of a differential duty, thus supposed for a moment, for the purposes of humanity as well as of monopoly, to be effectual, I should be disposed to entertain a doubt. But, Sir, when I consider that in checking the progress of the slave-trade, the safeguard of monopoly is utterly without avail,—when I consider that the differential duty, which keeps the price of sugar up, does not keep the price of human beings down—when I consider that without casting upon a barbarous traffic any, the slightest impediment, the differential duty has the effect of impairing the public revenue, and, by enhancing the cost of one of the necessities of life, of imposing upon the humbler classes of the community, a grievous charge—when I consider that the differential duty confers no substantial benefit upon any class of the community, excepting upon those benevolent monopolists whose sensibilities are not unprompted by their profits, and who, to the emotions of a lucrative philanthropy, find it as easy, as it is convenient, whenever a purpose, personal or political is to be promoted, to give way—I am at a loss, I own, to discover any just motive for giving sustenance to a monopoly fraught with so much multifarious evil, or for supporting the resolution of the noble Lord. That resolution is conceived in a spirit of such obvious partisanship that I cannot withhold the expression of my surprise that my right hon. and most distinguished Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets should have considered it to be consistent with his unaffected abhorrence of slavery (for his abhorrence of slavery is unaffected) to give it his support. It does not require his sagacity, forensic, judicial, and senatorial, to perceive that this resolution is little else than a sort of previous question in disguise; it contains no pledge against the future introduction of slave-grown-sugar—it is transitory and ephemeral; it provides a ready retreat from the high ground which the new, I should rather say, the novel associates of my right hon. Friend in the cause of freedom,

have so vauntingly taken up, and while it states, that the House of Commons is not prepared (no—not yet prepared) to recognise the introduction of slave-grown sugar, it intimates that under happier auspices, through that preparatory process, the House of Commons may be prevailed upon to pass. How little does this resolution, dexterous, adroit, and almost crafty, accord with the frank, the ingenuous, and, in the cause of virtue, the ardent and impassioned character of my right hon. Friend. If any doubt could be entertained regarding the object and the effect of such a resolution, it would be removed by the speech of the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, who declared again and again, that for the present a great experiment ought not to be disturbed. Surely this ought to convince my right hon. Friend, who will forgive me, I feel convinced, if I am bold enough to tell him that in supporting a resolution, couched in such phraseology as this is, he is almost as inconsistent as those incongruous sentimentalists by whom, provided it be not presented in a saccharine form, the produce of slave-labour is unscrupulously consumed. But from personal and innocuous inconsistencies, let me pass to the anomalies, which are incidental to our fiscal system. Last year we imported upwards of 28 million lbs. of slave coffee, of which upwards of 14 millions were slave-grown. The noble Lord the Member for Lancashire, struggling with this overcoming fact suggested that to the supply of the coffee-market our colonies were not adequate. The noble Lord seems to think that the encouragement of the slave-trade is matter of mercantile expediency, and that on the price-current our philanthropy ought to depend, and our markets should be opened or shut to slave-grown produce as they rose or fell. It is quite true that when the duty upon coffee was high—was 1s. 7d. per pound—the consumption was so inconsiderable that the colonies supplied us with all the coffee which we required; but when the duty was lowered, the consumption increased to an extent which, without exaggeration, may be designated as enormous. It is worth while to look with some minuteness into the effect which the diminution of duty produced upon the importation of coffee. The following table is remarkable.



## COFFEE—TAXATION AND CONSUMPTION.

Years.	Quantity re- tained for home consumption.	Rate of duty per lb.		Net revenue.
	lbs.	s.	d.	£
1807	1,170,164	1	7½	161,245
1812	8,118,734	0	7	255,184
1824	7,993,040	1	0	407,544
1831	21,842,264	0	6	559,431
1840	28,723,735	0	6	922,862

From this table it is manifest, that by the reduction of duty an enormous augmentation in the importation of coffee was produced. In 1807, when the duty was 1s. 7d., no more than 1,170,164 pounds of coffee were imported, the revenue was no more than 161,245l.; and when the duty was reduced, the importation of coffee rose to the vast amount of 28,723,735 pounds of coffee, and the revenue produced was 922,862l. I repeat that of this vast mass of coffee, more than 14 million pounds were slave-grown. But this anomaly, great as it is, is little when compared with the monstrous incongruity of receiving slave-grown sugar in bond, of refining and exporting it, and at the same time, of excluding it from the home market, where, upon its consumption, a duty might be raised. In 1840 we imported upwards of eight hundred thousand hundred-weight of slave-grown sugar—it was refined and exported. What revenue was raised upon it? Not a single shilling, while all the expenses incidental to the bonding system were incurred in its regard. By no one could such a system be sustained, except by the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, by whom an elaborate vindication of these anomalies was fearlessly undertaken. I shall not attempt to follow the noble Lord through the various and exceedingly irrelevant topics with which his speech was made up, but I think it right to disabuse the country of any erroneous impressions which, in reference to the opinions of Mr. Huskisson, the noble Lord laboured to produce. The noble Lord told us that he was a disciple of Mr. Huskisson, and took upon himself to set his opinions forth. Never was there a more egregious misrepresentation. After hearing the noble Lord, I turned to a more authorised source of information—the speeches of Mr. Huskisson—and I found that, in the account given of the sentiments of that

illustrious man, his disciple was most signally mistaken. In the year 1830, in the month of March, Mr. Huskisson made two speeches; one was delivered by him on the 16th of March, in a debate on the state of the country; the other on the 25th of March, upon a motion of Mr. Poulett Thomson. On the 16th of March, Mr. Huskisson said:—

“Our Corn-laws, however expedient to prevent other evils in the present state of the country, are in themselves a burden and a restraint upon its manufacturing and commercial industry. Whilst the products of that industry must descend to a level of the general market of the world, the producers, so far as food is concerned, are debarred from that level.”

But, Sir, in a subsequent but proximate debate, Mr. Huskisson expressed himself in a manner still more unequivocal. I shall read his exact words. They are to be found in page 555 of the third volume of his speeches. Those words are these:—

“It was” he said, “his unalterable conviction that we could not uphold the Corn-laws now in existence, together with the present system of taxation, and at the same time, increase the national prosperity and preserve public contentment. That those laws might be repealed without affecting the landed interest, whilst, at the same time, the distress of the people might be relieved, he never had any doubt whatever. A general feeling prevailed, that some change must be effected, and that speedily. Nor were there any individuals more thoroughly persuaded of it than those who moved in the humbler walks of life.”\*

Such was the language of Mr. Huskisson in 1830, language expressive of opinions very different from those which the noble Lord, who told us that he was his disciple (who could have conjectured it?), had ascribed to him. In 1830 Mr. Huskisson had been liberated from the trammels of the Tory party; he had abandoned that party to which the noble Lord is united now, and had thrown off the shackles which the noble Lord has now put on. Sir, I pass from the noble Lord to the monopoly which he sustains. I support what is commonly called, the West-India interest. There are West-Indians, I rejoice to say, who, of the mode of promoting the prosperity of our colonies, entertain a just appreciation. On the 11th of February last, a meeting was held

\* See also Hansard, vol. xxiii. New Series, pp. 602, 816

in Trinidad of the chief proprietors and agriculturists. Mr. Burnley was in the chair. He spoke as follows (I quote from a Trinidad paper):

"I shall hail with pleasure the day when every monopoly and restriction can, advantageously for the rest of the empire, be done away with. thank God! we are now emancipated as well as our labourers; and we can walk abroad, bold and erect, and claim the benefit of the freest principles; and if we are honestly and fairly allowed to trade with all the world without restriction, we fear no competition from any quarter in the colonial market of the mother-country; and when that is effected, the agriculture of Trinidad will successfully compete with that of every other country depending upon slave-labour."

These are wise and liberal opinions, but in these opinions, it is but just to say, that West-Indians, in this country at least, do not generally coincide. For my own part, I should be much disposed to make allowance for the feelings of the West-Indian proprietors, if they did not affect sentiment, if they did not talk of slavery and of its horrors (what right have they to talk of it?), and if they contented themselves with stating the circumstances which constitute the alleged hardship of their case. Their case is this—their slaves were emancipated in 1833, and for the loss which they sustained, they consider themselves to be entitled, in the shape of exclusive privileges, to compensation. This is a plain statement, and the answer is also plain—England paid a ransom, which almost dazzles the imagination, and she is entitled to a receipt in full. No, answers the Member for Newark, whose motion is insatiable, and who cries out like the horse-leech's daughter "More, more." The Member for Newark insists that the West-India planters were entitled not only to twenty millions, but to countless millions beyond that sum. He acknowledged, that since 1833, in addition to the twenty millions, the West-Indians had received at least, ten millions in the form of a protective duty. This admission is most important. But the Member for Newark is mistaken in supposing the sum paid to the West Indies, in the form of protection, to be so small as ten millions, in addition to the twenty which was paid them. I inquired of my friend Mr. McGregor, the Secretary of the Board of Trade, how far the Member for Newark was correct, and he, who is distinguished for accuracy as well as for surpassing

talent, told me that the West-Indies had received upwards of nineteen millions, in addition to the twenty millions already paid them. He gave me the following table:

Years.	Quantity consumed.	Difference of price.	Amount of tax or premium to West-India Interest.
		£. s. d.	£
1834	4,154,411	0 6 2	1,280,943
1835	4,421,145	0 6 0	1,326,343
1836	3,922,901	0 13 0	2,549,885
1837	4,349,053	0 13 4	2,679,934
1838	4,418,334	0 12 5	2,743,048
1839	4,171,938	0 17 1	3,471,151
1840	3,764,710	1 7 7	5,192,161

Total tax since abolition.....19,243,465

The House hates vulgarities of all kinds, and of all vulgar things, hates vulgar arithmetic the most; but on this occasion some indulgence for figures ought to be manifested, and the table which I have produced ought to be examined, when to the West-India planters we are invoked to extend our commiseration. But mark, these West-Indians are not contented with that they have already got; they insist upon a permanent tax upon the English people. I contend, Sir, that a perpetuation of monopoly was no part of the contract made with the West-India planters. The noble Lord the Member for Lancashire, who told us, that as the organ of the Whig Government (the organ of the Whig Government!!) he introduced the Emancipation Act, has not suggested that the continuance of monopoly was any part of the contract. If it were, upon what principle could the equalisation of the duties on East and West-Indian sugar and rum have been sustained? When that equalisation was proposed, the unfortunate West-Indians made out precisely the same case as they make out at present. They told us that the West Indies were in a state of transition, that a great experiment ought not to be disturbed, that East-India sugar was the produce of slave-labour, that it was produced from dates at a very inferior cost. With what scorn were these expostulations received by the representatives of the East-Indian interest in the House of Commons! how indignant they were at the remotest, and the most delicate refe-

rence to Hill Coolies and to slaves; and with what impassioned force my hon. Friend, the Member for Beverley, denounced the effrontery of the men, who with twenty millions in their coffers, to a continuance of their monopoly had the audacity to put in a claim: but now—now, Sir, that these East-Indians have got a share in the privileges against which they inveighed so vehemently: now that they are embraced in the monopoly which they represented as so detestable, they who have made no sacrifice, by whom no loss of any kind has been sustained, whose slaves have not been emancipated; they forsooth, have the unparalleled intrepidity to turn round, and, uniting themselves with those very West-Indians of whom they were before the fierce antagonists, talk to us of the expediency of sustaining the colonial interests, while of the interests of the people of England they are utterly forgetful, and think nothing of the sacrifice which an exorbitant protection, even upon their own admission, of necessity involves. The resolution adverts to sacrifices: yes, much has indeed been sacrificed, but you are not contented; you require that an annual tribute shall be offered to monopoly, and to ensure its punctual payment, you insist that, instead of recruiting the revenue by a just apportionment of existing duties, new burdens shall be imposed upon the people. This proceeding will, most assuredly be attended with evils far greater than any which can by possibility arise from reducing the duties upon sugar, from introducing it into a larger consumption, and thus producing that accession to the revenue which, if we may judge from the parallel case of coffee, must necessarily ensue. If such consequences followed from the reduction of the duty upon coffee as I have proved to have been derived from it, from the reduction of the duty upon sugar, whose admixture with coffee is indispensable, and of which the use is so multifarious, analogous results must follow. Independently of this fiscal advantage, a two-fold benefit must accrue to the great mass of the community. In the first place, we cheapen one of the necessities of life, and in the next place it is obvious that if we take more of the produce of other countries, other countries must take more of the produce of our own; to that extent the manufactures of England must be promoted, and to that

extent the employment of our operatives must be encouraged. To their sufferings, the Tories everywhere I hope, at the hustings I am sure, are alive; but when the obvious means of alleviation are proposed, they sacrifice the interests of that vast class of the community for which so much commiseration is possessed by them, to the maintenance of that too narrow commercial system, by which, if we adhere to it, consequences the most pernicious will be entailed upon us. We are met upon the continent by retaliatory tariffs. Of our discoveries in mechanics, of our finest and most powerful machines, of the advantages of which, we were once in the exclusive enjoyment, our foreign competitors are now possessed; to other markets, to markets in the countries, in which manufactures do not exist, and in which it will be our fault if they shall arise, the eyes of every British statesman ought to be intently turned; and, above all, to that splendid mart which is opened to us, in the young and prosperous empire of Brazil. I am astonished that any man should speak of our commercial relations with that rapidly progressing country in the language of depreciation. Before his constituents, such language would not be adopted by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool; he would not, before his constituents venture to insinuate that he considered the renewal of the treaty with Brazil as a matter of small amount; or if he did, and looked from the hustings to the harbour of that great city which he has the honour to represent, in many a noble ship, of all his fallacies he would behold the competition. But how can we reasonably expect that the Brazilians will make concessions to us, if to them we refuse to make any concessions; and if the Parliament of England is not prepared (to adopt the phraseology of your resolution) to take the produce of Brazil, have we not reason to apprehend that the Parliament of Brazil will be unprepared to take the produce of England? And, even with reference to the slave-trade, is it not likely that we shall accomplish far more by treaty, enforced as treaty ought to be, than by any fiscal regulations which it is possible to devise? One of the evils resulting from these fiscal regulations is this:—the people of England are taught to rely upon them as the means of restraining the slave-trade, instead of adopting the measures

by which that important object might be obtained. Meetings are held, harangues are delivered, admirable resolutions are passed, and the work of abomination all the while goes on. Of a great and powerful country expedients, so unavailing as our differential duties have been proved to be, are unworthy, and when England stands forward in the cause of humanity, it is not from the Custom-house that her weapons should be supplied. Despite your differential duty, the slave-trade is infamously prosperous—despite of it, the monster consumes his thousand victims a day. There is not a creek upon the slave-coast in which the barks engaged in that atrocious traffic do not lie in wait; and even while I speak—while we sit in council here—across that ocean which Englishmen are accustomed to call their own—across that ocean which has been most nobly called “your home upon the deep”—how many a slave-bark, freighted with woe, despite your differential duty, holds on with impunity her swift and unimpeded way, while you, with the evidence, the incontrovertible evidence before you, of the futility—the utter and most scandalous futility of your differential duty for the accomplishment of any one purpose by which the interests of humanity, as distinct from those of monopoly, can be promoted—instead of calling upon England, to put forth her might, and invoking her to employ the only efficient means by which this horrible traffic in our fellow-creatures can be put down expatiate upon the blessings of monopoly; descant upon 63s. and 36s., and 24s., and propound resolutions for the sustainment of that fiscal anomaly, by which (and you know it,) to the atrocities of the slave-trade not the slightest obstacle is presented, while to our revenues the deepest detriment is done. The embarrassments with which every Minister of this country, whether he be Whig or Tory, will have to contend for many a day, will be augmented, by which a deprivation of one of the commonest commodities of life will be inflicted upon the lower classes—by which industry will be paralysed, the employment of our suffering and pining operatives will be abridged, our commercial relations with one of our best allies will be endangered, and we shall run the risk of closing, perhaps for ever, a field of almost boundless enterprise upon the commercial genius of the English people.

Mr. *Herries* was well aware of the difficulty of arresting the attention of the House after so long a debate, especially at the close of a speech in which the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had displayed almost more than his usual brilliancy of rhetoric. He was aware, that both the House and the country were weary of the subject, and that the constituencies of the empire who looked for something more than a long protracted debate, were expecting with impatience the decision to which the House was to arrive. It would have been unnecessary for him to trouble the House on this question, after the unequalled and unanswerable speech of his noble Friend the Member for North Lancashire, had he not wished to recall hon. Gentlemen to the real matter in debate, and place the issue on a proper footing. The propositions announced to the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, were founded upon the present financial emergency, and it was necessary in the first instance to examine what was the nature of that emergency, which required the application of such remedies, and then to look at the remedies themselves, and see how far fitted they were to meet the object for which they were intended, and also how far they were free from other objections which might render them inexpedient. The House had been informed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the noble Lord, that the finances of the country were in a deplorable condition. That, then, was the difficulty in which the country was placed, and the question was how did it come to be placed in that difficulty? After four years of administration by the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues—after four years of embarrassment, a crisis at length arrived—things had come to a dead lock, and the right hon. Gentleman called on the House for assistance. The right hon. Gentleman a few evenings before, had challenged a comparison between his own administration and those of his predecessors, and had most incautiously and unaccountably told the House, in answer to a remark of the hon. Member for Surrey respecting the necessity of maintaining a large surplus, that no former Chancellor of the Exchequer, any more than himself, had ever taken any heed about a surplus. He was strangely deceived if Mr. *Huskisson* had not always declared himself strongly

in favour of a prudent line of conduct in the management of finance, and of maintaining a large surplus. When he heard the expressions of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, he was lost in astonishment, for it was a most remarkable fact, and one to which the attention of the House could not be too strongly directed, that the present Administration was the first and the only one, he believed, in the history of this country, which in time of peace had suffered a continued deficiency to exist in the public finances. He really wondered, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not shocked by the contrast when he cast his eyes back on the official career of his predecessors. In time of war, indeed, there must, from the nature of things, be a deficiency, for then the revenue was not adequate to meet the extraordinary expenses that arose; but that in time of peace a Government should suffer the finances to fall into such a state of derangement that in five consecutive years of peace a deficiency of 7,000,000*l.* should have been accumulated, was a fact widely different from anything that had occurred under any former Administration. What was the course followed by modern Administrations in order to the maintenance of a sound financial system? Between the years 1816 and 1828, when the subject was brought under the consideration of the finance committee, it appeared from the statements produced before that body, that the surplus in those twelve years, arising from public monies, and applied to the reduction of the public debt in that period, was 31,900,000*l.* In the three years following—namely, 1828, 1829, and 1830—when the finances were under the Administration of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, there was a surplus of 10,000,000*l.* In the six years which followed, composing the Administration of Lord Althorpe, and the two first years of the Administration of Lord Monteagle, there was a surplus of 6,700,000*l.*; and then commenced the fruits of the policy followed by Gentlemen opposite. He should be wrong in saying there had been no deficiency during the period over which he had glanced; there was one, and that furnished an instance of the difference in spirit between the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and those who had preceded him in his office. That occurred

under Lord Althorpe, and every one who heard him, who had then been in the House, must recollect with what regret Lord Althorpe deplored the occurrence of that deficiency, with how much assiduity he applied himself to repair it, and how anxious he was that there should not be a recurrence of it in any future year. Not only was Lord Althorpe exceedingly solicitous to prevent such a deficiency in future, but when he made an estimate of the finances, by which it appeared to him, although he then took too unfavourable a view, that his resources would not exceed by more than 300,000*l.* his expenditure, he said—

“ Now, Sir, although I never was an advocate for a large sinking fund, or a large surplus revenue, I certainly think that a surplus of 300,000*l.* is coming too near the margin.”

Such were the opinions of the predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and such was the way in which they conducted themselves while in office. Now came the period when that financial emergency arose which the House was now called upon to remedy, and that too without any apology, as if such embarrassments were things of course—as if they had occurred under all his predecessors, and had been often heard of in that House. The emergency was not the less urgent that shifts had been resorted to unscrupulously, that means of defraying the current expenditure had been taken, which were only explained after they had been employed; that 4,000,000*l.* of Exchequer-bills had been funded at the end of a Session, and that an additional number was to be funded; but, above all, that from year to year Government had been poaching upon the savings-banks, although those institutions furnished a machinery that had never been intended for such a purpose. Yet the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had broadly told the House, that he found the Treasury could exercise that power, and that, though it was not intended to be used, he would make use of it. He was not imputing this as blame exclusively to the Chancellor of the Exchequer; he was imputing it as blame to the whole Government with which the right hon. Gentleman was connected. Let not hon. Gentlemen opposite, suppose that he did not mean to impute blame. He did impute it; for he should be shrinking from his duty if he did not. He charged the Go-

vernment with the most flagrant and heinous mismanagement of the finances that had ever taken place under any Government, which had conducted public affairs in this country. To what then was this to be traced? Was it to some national disaster? Had any of the springs of our national wealth been dried up? Had our revenue failed us? Nothing like it. Had there been any extraordinary or unforeseen expenditure for foreign services? No such thing. There had been no extraordinary expenditure that ought not to have been foreseen by any Minister at the time of framing his budget. Why was it, then, that year after year we had been gradually involved in increasing distress and danger? The reason was so obvious that he did not believe there was a child of ten years old within these realms, who did not perfectly understand it. He did not believe, that anybody was so little informed on public affairs, or so devoid of reflection, as not to know that the whole of those great difficulties in which we were involved was owing to the feebleness of Government. They were the result of engagements and compacts made to obtain support from parties in that House, without which the Government could not exist, and for the sake of which it had made those sacrifices. The deficiency on the present year was 2,400,000*l.* of which 1,700,000*l.* was a permanent charge, and out of this 1,400,000*l.* was owing to the giving up of the Post-office revenue. If they had been now in possession of that revenue, there would have been no necessity for any of those extraordinary measures which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had proposed. He had established, then, that the basis of the proposition was to be found solely in the conduct of those who had held the reins of power for the last few years, and they were now called upon to go into committee to consider a scheme which was held forth as the only means of extricating us from the difficulties of our situation. In any remarks which he should now make, he should consider that this was not the time for criticising the computations upon which the budget was made to rest. He should assume, then, that the deficiency was correctly stated at 2,400,000*l.*, and proceed to consider the measures which they were asked to adopt—1st, as measures of finance; 2nd, as the foundation of a new system for the administration of our fiscal and commer-

cial affairs. The principle upon which it was proposed to alter the duties on timber, sugar, and corn undoubtedly was, that they should admit into the consumption of the country a certain portion of the produce of foreign states, so as to displace a part of the produce of our colonies, which was now used in its stead. If any return of money was expected on any of the heads which the Government plan embraced, the principle was that competition should be allowed partially to substitute foreign for native produce in the consumption of the home market. The first two articles were singularly ill-chosen, because at this particular time there were objections of a higher kind than any of a merely fiscal nature, which especially operated against the adoption of such alterations. With respect to timber, the House had been told by the noble Lord opposite (J. Russell), that he had received from the person of all others the best qualified to judge of the probable effects of the measure, the Governor-general of Canada, an intimation that that alteration of duty at the present time would create embarrassment to him in the great settlement of the Canadian government, and constitution which was now in progress. The noble Lord had coupled that observation with the remark, that there was some other plan which would compensate Canada for the change; but the House was left in the most complete ignorance of its nature and object. He should merely say, that if, in addition to the other objections to the alteration of the timber duties, it was calculated to throw difficulties in the way of the noble Lord at the head of our North American provinces, that consideration alone should deter the House from thinking, for an instant, of such a change. With respect to the sugar duties, which were more immediately before the House, the objections expressed in the resolution of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, and dwelt upon by those who had taken part in the debate, rendered it unnecessary for him to enter on the subject at much length. But the objection which, in his judgment, had been most properly taken, was to going into committee at all, because the objection was one of principle against the adoption, at the present time of this particular alteration. He for one felt convinced that this objection was of such paramount importance, and such validity

and overwhelming force, that he was prepared to vote against going into committee to consider these alterations. The objection in principle was this, that the Legislature was called upon by the Government to make a change in these duties, whereby they either did nothing at all, or they would admit into consumption in this country the produce of other countries, displacing thereby the produce of their own colonies; and the objection went still further, inasmuch as a change of this description at the present time, and under existing circumstances, would in the opinion of those best acquainted with, and most competent to give an opinion on the subject, put to hazard of the greatest extremity, the important experiment to abolish slavery and put an end to the slave-trade, which this country had made. Upon this point the House had already heard so much of the testimony of those most capable of giving evidence upon the subject, that he felt it was unnecessary for him again to travel through it; but he could not refrain from stating and endeavouring again to impress upon the House, some of the most forcible grounds which the testimony of those witnesses established, and which, in his humble opinion, called upon the House to abstain from the adoption of a measure of the description proposed by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer. What was the state of the case with respect to the West-India colonies and the great experiment of emancipation? All those best able to afford information, all the public documents now before the House, all the reports received from the governors of those colonies, all the testimony of the individuals who had visited the colonies for the purpose of acquiring information, all the opinions of those most deeply interested, and who had taken the most active part in obtaining negro emancipation; all these evidences appeared to agree in the fact that the experiment was at present working successfully and producing those fruits which the country had a right to expect after the enormous sacrifices which had been made to attain that object, and also that it was yet matter of doubt whether or not the free peasantry which, by an act of the Legislature, had been established in the British colonies, would be enabled to produce a sufficient supply of the staple articles of those colonies for the consumption of this country.

When he looked at the character of the opinions which had been given on that subject, he could not hesitate to come to the conclusion that beyond all question if the experiment which had been made were allowed a fair trial—if interference of any description were avoided while that experiment was made, there would be every reason to expect that the utmost hopes of the country would be realized, and that there would be a successful issue to all their endeavours by a sufficient cultivation of the staple commodities of the colonies by the newly established free peasantry. There was a person who had visited those colonies lately, and to whose testimony on the point the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets had, on a former evening referred—a person who was deserving of all consideration and attention, not only on account of his high character and integrity, but also on account of the great intelligence and judgment which he possessed. Mr. Gurney on this subject said,

“But, lastly, in making this republication, I have one peculiar object in view—an object which I deem to be of the highest practical importance to the future prosperity of the cause of freedom, and especially to my own plan for the extinction of the slave trade—I mean the maintenance of the present prohibitory duties on slave-grown coffee and sugar. If, under the difficulties of the present crisis, as it regards the quantity and price of those articles, the duties in question should be relaxed or extinguished, a market of immense magnitude would immediately be opened for the produce of the slave-labour of the Brazils, Cuba, and Porto Rico. The consequence would be, that ruin would soon overtake the planters of our West-Indian colonies, and our free negroes would be deprived of their principal means of obtaining an honourable and comfortable livelihood; but far more extensive, far more deplorable, would be the effect of such a change on the millions of Africa. A vast new impulse would be given to slave-labour, and therefore to the slave-trade; and both the number and energy of those who delight to prey on the vitals of Africa would be indefinitely increased. True, indeed, it is, that the high price of sugar is an inconvenience of no small magnitude to the population of great Britain and Ireland; and if that price should be still somewhat increased, the inconvenience would be more severely felt than it is at present. But the following letters contain, I trust, some clear and indisputable evidences that these difficulties are in their nature temporary. The present diminished produce of sugar and coffee in the West Indies is the result of that unsettlement which took place immediately after the date of full freedom.”

Such was the opinion given by a person eminently qualified to pronounce a judgment upon the subject. There was another testimony recently brought under the notice of the House which was scarcely less impressive than that which he had just read. Sir T. F. Buxton, a witness who, from every side of the House, deserved consideration, respect, and attention, a man whose whole life had been devoted to the subject, stated,

"I can have no hesitation in saying, that, in my opinion, the best and wisest course that we can pursue is to enforce the prohibitory duties against slave-trade-grown sugar—that is against the sugars of Cuba and Brazil. It seems to me one of those questions in which ordinary rules are to be disregarded, and in which considerations of political advantage must be made to yield to the superior law of moral duty. We cannot admit the produce of Cuba and Brazil into home consumption without giving a vast impulse to the growth of sugar in those countries; or, in other words, without giving the strongest encouragement to the slave-trade."

These remarks embraced the fundamental principles, and stated explicitly the strong grounds upon which he felt disposed to oppose the consideration of that proposition on the part of the Government at such a time, under such circumstances, and for such an object, and with such prospects as the West-India colonies presented. Setting aside entirely all consideration of the interests of the West-India planters, setting aside also all reference to the contract supposed to have been made with them at the time the 20,000,000*l.* was paid them, he contended that the present state of the colonies and of the liberated slaves, the prospects of the free peasantry which had been therein created, and the chance of the complete success, if undisturbed, of the experiment which had been made, afforded sufficient grounds to induce the House to pause before it went into committee, even for the consideration of this question. And what were the advantages which it was supposed would be derived from the proposed change? The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had urged the great probability that the West-India colonies, if left alone, would produce sugar more than sufficient to meet the demands of this country, and, therefore, to furnish, as hitherto they had done, an additional supply for exportation. Now, if it were true that there was no danger of an

inadequate supply for home consumption (and this appeared from the paper which had to-day been presented to hon. Members), then it followed as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to surmise, that without the introduction of foreign produce, there would be a reduction in price, which it was the object of the present scheme to effect. Prior to emancipation, it was well known that sugar was imported from the British colonies to an extent more than sufficient to supply the home consumption, and the price of sugar in the United Kingdom, with the exception of the bounty allowed on the process of refinement, had been the same as it was upon the Continent. From the papers this day laid before the House, it appeared, that the whole difference between the continental price and the English price of sugar arose from the difference which existed in the habits of the two nations. Such being the state of the case, and if it were true, that in all human probability, the country had a right to expect, that the produce of the British colonies would be amply sufficient to supply the demands of this country, and so as to afford sugar to all classes of the population at as low a rate as could be expected to be obtained by the competition of foreign sugar, then he contended, that to attempt to carry the measure—a measure fraught with so much danger—was little short of insanity. Such were the grounds upon which he mainly founded his objections to going into committee on the proposition of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But it had been stated, that this and the other two measures connected with it came before the House, recommended not merely on the ground of their being calculated to have the effect of restoring the embarrassed state of the finances, but recommended by the wider consideration—that of the introduction of a better principle in the administration of the fiscal and commercial affairs of the country. Of this principle a great boast had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in the course of those boastings high words had been used, and constant reference had been made to one particular section of the House which comprised the political economists. Now, he begged to state, that as far as he could understand the statements of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Gentleman had not made any



proposition that was in accordance with the principles of that party. If he (Mr. Herries) at all understood the principles of free trade as maintained by the disciples of the "Blus Book," they were these—that the population of this country were to consume in every respect that produce which came to them cheapest—whether it was the produce of foreign or British colonies, and that the Legislature ought not to impose any protection, by restrictive duties on foreign produce, which should yield an advantage to British produce, even in the British market. These were the principles laid down and maintained by the purest political economists. Was that the principle which her Majesty's Government now proposed to adopt—did they mean to go that length? It was right that the House and the country should know whether those who, for the sake of procuring applause and agitation out of doors, and votes within the House, had proclaimed principles which in reality they did not mean to sustain. In short, was not the Government by their present proposition, seeking to gain votes under false pretences? There was no part of the doctrines of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which did not savour of protection; they intended to give protection. As to corn, they said that 8s. was a protection. They said also, that with regard to sugar, 50 per cent. was a sufficient protection, and they did not pretend to take sugar where they could get it cheapest. There might be much difference as to the degree of protection, or whether any protection would be afforded by those duties, but that would still be only a question of degree; and the Government meant merely to provide, by means of an adjusted scale, that when our own supply failed us, the foreign supply should come in. These were no principles of free trade—they were principles which, on that side of the House, had always been recognised and acted upon; they were the principles upon which all the great commercial reforms, which took place under Mr. Huskisson and Lord Liverpool, between 1820 and 1830, proceeded—they abated excessive protection: they removed prohibition, which was excessive protection; and if the right hon. Gentleman could show them that by removing these duties, the protection would only be reduced to a fair and reasonable level, these were subjects proper for discussion in the committee—they

were points for practical enquiry; but to these measures there were objections antecedent to going into committee, and these objections he had already stated. In the course of these discussions some observations had been made upon what were called "class interests." It was with great regret that he had heard a Minister of the Crown make sneering observations of that sort, and speaking of "class interests" as if it were to be assumed that for the sake of those interests alone these special protections had been imposed—as if it had been done for their benefit—as if these were separate classes, who were protected at the expense of the rest—as if the shipping interest was a class interest—as if supposing that they did give great encouragement to their shipping, as he hoped they ever would, they did it for the sake of those who were the holders of ships, or who were connected with ships, or for those who sailed in ships. And did they really think that that was the case? As if the agriculture of this country were a class interest—and they believed it! Impossible; and they believed that our colonies was another class interest? And they thought that the policy of this country had been for the sake of the colonial proprietors, for the sake of the shipping proprietors, and for the sake of the landed proprietors—to give encouragement and support to these interests? And that the policy of this country had been so miserably short-sighted—as hon. Gentlemen would make it? Were not hon. Gentlemen aware that the interests of our mercantile and military marine were not limited to any particular individuals in this country—that they were as much the interests and the property of the whole nation as the air we breathed and the light by which we saw. Good God! how was it possible to suppose that these protections had been maintained for the sake of a particular class. If the House should conceive that the protection of the landed interests of this country, the encouragement of that branch of industry which supplied sustenance to the people, the protection of three-fourths of the inhabitants of the kingdom, was not a national object, then was he at a loss to know what was. If these were the views of the statesmen at the other side of the House—if these were the maxims of the Government—not taking into consideration how much of our own glory, wealth, and pros-

perity as a nation was dependent on these great branches of our colonial, shipping, and agricultural trade—that, being for certain class interests, they are therefore not for the benefit of the whole, but only for the benefit of the particular class—then it was better that other men should administer the Government of this country. He could not hear without disgust the sneers which had been thrown upon the great interests of the country, as if they were the impediments to our national prosperity. If it could be shown that the landlords were protected only for themselves—if it could be shown that the country would be better, that the honour the wealth, the happiness of the country would be better provided for, that the shipping interest, that our colonies, and our interchange with them, were of no service to our commerce, and that no wealth was derived from them, then the arguments of Gentlemen opposite might prevail. But it was because these interests were essential to the interests of the whole, that they were inseparably connected with the whole empire, that in them the safety, the honour, and the strength of the nation was concerned, that that House could not, wisely or justly, considering the national interests, refuse to give that support for the good of the whole, which was absolutely necessary as a proper protection. Whenever it shall happen that these great interests shall be considered merely as a class, and not as a part of the whole nation, and whenever any Government shall carry out its principles to such an extent, and whenever it shall happen that the Parliament of this country shall treat the colonial, the sugar, and the agricultural interests as interests not deserving of support and protection, then the honour, the glory, and the wealth of this great country shall have passed away. He had nothing to add to that observation, except that he should give his best support to the amendment of his noble Friend the Member for Liverpool. As far as the sugar duties were concerned, he felt that this country would incur an enormous responsibility if at present it should interrupt the great experiment which had been introduced by giving encouragement to the introduction of slave-grown sugar.

Mr. Villiers said, that he had listened to the speech of the right hon. Member with great interest, for, knowing that he

had been connected with the finances of the country, and expecting that he might soon be so again, he was anxious to learn his views on the state of that financial emergency in which he had described the country to be placed—he wished to learn the objections which he entertained to the plan projected by the Government; but he did not remember to have ever been more disappointed, for all that he learnt from the hon. Member was, his opinion that the present financial condition of the country was owing to the feebleness of the present Government—an opinion, certainly that he expected to have heard supported by him, but which he had been content merely to state. He certainly informed them that it was on high ground on which he opposed the means which the Government had proposed of supplying the deficiency, but he did not inform them by what other means he would supply that deficiency himself. Nor had he done much towards the conversion of Members on that side by merely proposing the question whether they could really believe that the commercial restrictions of which they complained existed for a mere benefit of those whose interests were served by them; he asked a question, and until he shewed them some reason for not doing so, he must hear in reply that they did confidently entertain the opinion that these classes and interests were so profited and protected for their own interest, at the expense of the community. He was, however, glad to have heard the hon. Member, for the same reason that he was glad that the debate had been protracted, namely, that the country should be able to judge of the validity of the arguments used against the measures projected by the Government; and when it was considered how various were the principles, how opposite was the policy and how different were the reasons upon which Members were going to vote together that evening, it was not without its use. The protraction of the debate, however, was a necessary consequence of the circumstances under which the resolution of the noble Lord was proposed, for by this means the state of the whole nation was brought under review. They were now in a moment that had long been predicted as at hand, that had been desired by many, and that all must admit to have arrived, namely, a time of great financial difficulty; and it had come connected with, if not caused by, greater commercial embarrass-

ment than had occurred in the memory of most people living. The Government announced this fact to the House, and stated their plans with the view to supply the deficiency, and maintain the resources of the country. Now, if he understood the scheme which they had proposed, and the principles on which it was based, they were these—that inasmuch as the taxation of this country depended on the general expenditure, and that this again depended upon the employment of the people and the prosperity of commerce, they proposed by removing the restrictions on commerce, and the duties on articles of general consumption, to extend the means of consumption, and improve the ability of the consumer. They proposed, in fact, to raise the revenue, not by imposing fresh burdens, but improving the general condition of the community. These restrictions, however, had not been imposed from caprice, but for the purpose of upholding particular interests and particular classes, whenever those interests or classes were unable to uphold themselves. Resistance, therefore, to their removal was offered, and though not avowedly perhaps on the ground that they were monopolies, yet resistance on some pretext or other there was sure to be; and in the battle for monopoly against freedom which had now begun, the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool had taken the lead. The noble Lord, when he appealed to their sympathies for the negroes in Brazil, in opposition to a project for the improvement of the condition of the people at home, made it necessary to refer to their condition; and from the manner in which the noble Lord's friends, and others, had argued the question, it was rendered incumbent on them to discuss the whole scheme of policy propounded by the Government, and upon that, doubtless the decision would be taken. And certainly he for one who had, with others in this House, and on behalf of others out of this House, invariably advocated the principles involved in that policy, could not but express his hearty satisfaction at seeing them thus recognised by the Government. He knew that their recognition would aid their discussion, and he believed their discussion would establish their truth. He felt, indeed, nothing but satisfaction at the prospect which the present circumstances offered of their ultimate triumph. He viewed their progress in the country as the sign of the spirit and intelligence

of the people,—for having been shown, by means of an active and intelligent agitation throughout the country for two years past, the partial and arbitrary character of their commercial and protective laws, and they were rising in every direction in opposition to them. The influence of the general feeling had reached this House, and he could not help being diverted at the eagerness which this year was displayed on the part of some Members to avow themselves either the new converts to, or old friends of, the doctrines of free-trade; whereas in the last year they were derided as visionary, theoretical, or impracticable. Indeed, there had been some signs of this new-born zeal on the other side being deemed indiscreet by the leaders of the party; and he thought he could discover in the speech of the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, something like trouble taken to explain the opinions of his friends. An able and important speech, doubtless it was, of the noble Lord's, and one on which his party seemed much to rely, but its importance seemed to him chiefly to turn upon the means which he employed to reconcile the friends of monopoly with the friends of free-trade. The noble Lord, however, only proved to him that this was a question which it was difficult to meet, and that it would be wise to evade, and the noble Lord showed that while he knew well what were the principles of free trade, he was not an advocate of those principles. The noble Lord on this occasion drew a weapon from the armoury of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth—one that he told them he was in the habit of using, namely, dressing up statements for the purpose of imposing on this House; for the noble Lord attempted to dress up a principle which he professed to avow with regard to commercial policy, that he must have hoped would have been taken for free trade by its advocates, and for monopoly by those who maintained that system. The noble Lord, after repudiating the doctrines of free trade, denied also that he was for monopoly; what then was he? Why he said he was a disciple of Mr. Huskisson, who, he told us, was the minister of common sense, and that he was his follower, and that his principle, as opposed to that of free-trade, was competition subject to limitation, or competition regulated by protection. Why, what was to be understood by such a principle, and what was there that might not be

meant by it. Why it would include any monopoly and restriction the most objectionable that could be named. The landowner would ask him what competition he meant for them, and he would say that which was regulated by the Corn-laws. The shipowner would seek the same information, and he would learn of course the present timber duties. And so with the West-India proprietor, who might be assured that the people should never be allowed to consume cheap sugar. And he might thus satisfy the monopolists all round. But, Sir, though this might satisfy the scruples of some troublesome partizans of the noble Lord, it would, he might be assured, do little to please the commercial classes in their present mood, and that now that the public mind was directed exclusively to this subject of protection, some better explanation must be given than this of the views of the noble Lord. This was not a moment for a man to have any doubt as to his opinions on this subject; the whole question of protection must now be discussed. There was no such thing as a little protection here, and a little more there; it either rested on some principle, or it did not. If it did, then it should be generally applied; but if it did not, then one interest was not more entitled to it than another. The noble Lord thought he had satisfied the point when he said, that the Government only proposed protection, and not free trade, and that he, on his side, did the same. Now, he saw this difference between the noble Lord and the Government—he understood the latter to be for free trade as a principle, and have its establishment in view as an end, and that when they retained protection, or professed to maintain it, it was either with the view to deal with some powerful interest, from whom it was impossible to obtain complete justice for the community, or it was when any particular interest bore some exclusive burthen, against which it was just to give indemnity: but he understood the party opposite to recommend protection on the principle of the right hon. Member for Harwich, namely, that it was right to uphold by legislation particular interests and particular classes, with a view to some general good as they would allege that the country derived from that system. But he contended that the claim of one interest to protection was as good as that of another, and there was not one single argument that could be advanced against

protection, when claimed by any interest against a public improvement by which it was affected by it, such as a railroad by those who profited by the old mode of intercourse by a working man against machinery, or by any invention that superseded his employment, that did not equally apply to the claim of the landholder, or the shipowner, or the West-Indian, when he asked for his interests to be maintained against the community by some law. The argument of the poor man when he destroyed machinery, or combined with his fellow-workmen to keep up their wages, was, that he should suffer by being deprived of his occupation, or that he should lose by a reduction of his wages. And what was it that they heard on questions of Corn-laws and sugar laws, and timber laws? Why, that however beneficial their removal might be, the parties interested in them, would suffer by their repeal. This, then, was the view taken of this subject now by the great body of the productive classes. "Protection to all or none," was their cry. And that it was hard to sacrifice the poor man to the general good, when he was made to suffer further to uphold the particular interest of the great and powerful. It was, therefore that the public were looking with intense interest to know what the precise views of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, were on this principle, and of its application to the great interests affected by the scheme of the Government. The right hon. Baronet certainly had been hitherto consistent in resisting any infringement of the protection which the great interests had in this country, and in referring to a very able speech that the right hon. Baronet made on the subject of the Corn-laws, he certainly found, that the right hon. Baronet pledged himself to adhere to the great protection which the landlords had; and he was not likely to be affected by the argument that it was not the right time, which was adduced against the noble Lord's proposition, for the right hon. Baronet had said, "If you had called on us to abandon this protection with all the authority of an united administration, with the exhibition of superior sagacity, and triumphant reasoning, we should have been deaf to your appeal." This, doubtless, was candid, and he hoped that the right hon. Baronet would be equally clear when he expressed his opinions that night, for nobody could doubt that this was really the question at the

bottom of all this discussion ; and it was the one on which the public cared to have his opinion ; so strongly indeed did he feel this, that he hardly knew how to look at the resolution that was proposed to stop the progress of the Ministerial scheme. He did not, of course, intend to impute motives to the noble mover of this resolution, but really he could not but think, if they heard of any other people refusing commercial intercourse with themselves on such grounds, they would be apt to charge such a people with prostituting a sacred principle to serve a sordid purpose. What could they say to the Americans, for instance, if they were to refuse intercourse with them because the great body of the people were not represented here as fully as they were ; and if they found that those who urged this plea were those who desired to raise their own tariff to exclude English manufactures. Indeed, what would they say if they found the Americans taking the same view of their Corn-laws as they did of their system of slavery, and refusing intercourse with us while we maintained a system so fraught with misery and wretchedness to the people of this country. It was the same principle ; which was that of regulating their commercial relations with other countries by the condition of the working classes of those countries. And was it so very impossible that this view of their own Corn-laws should be taken ? He had received a paper from America only that day, in which he found that they were regarded as the corresponding outrage in this country with their slavery. These were the words of the American writer :—

“The statesmen, and merchants, and farmers, and philanthropists of the United States, have long been in the way of regarding the Corn-laws of Great Britain and the slave laws of America, as belonging to the same class of statutes. . . . And as we see a very intimate connection of the two, in their nature and influence, we expect to see a very close connection of the two in their overthrow—that as they have been eminently hateful and mischievous in their lives, in their deaths they will be not far divided.”

From a pamphlet of the same date, published in Washington, he found all the evils and mischief springing out of the Corn-laws pointed out and implying, that a time was at hand when it might be politic to discontinue their commerce with this country. The passage which he would read was as follows :—

“The British Corn-law, as settled in 1828, by the act of 9th Geo. 4th, c. 60, is one of the most ingeniously contrived schemes that can well be imagined, calculated to injure the grain-growing interests of other countries, and the grain-consuming portions of its own people, without, it is believed, a corresponding advantage to the agricultural interest, for whose benefit it was intended. The tendency of this system to general impoverishment, and to the increase of misery and discontent among the poorer classes, is already awakening intense observation in Great Britain. The manufactories stop work, because orders do not come from America ; and the orders are not sent, because that with which payment might be made to a large amount, will not be received on any just and reasonable terms. The goods are wanted here, and our free industry is abundantly able to produce the means of payment ; but the great staple of the north-west is under an interdict. The operatives are thrown out of employment, and reduced to the lowest means of subsistence, and unable to consume a full measure of the products of agriculture, and thousands are made paupers, and become an absolute charge upon the land. The consumption of agricultural products is diminished—the agricultural labourers share the common distress—and agriculture itself, the very object sought to be benefited by this unnatural arrangement, is oppressed by its own protection. It is demonstrable that a well employed, well-paid, well-fed, prosperous community of operatives, would consume and pay for more agricultural products, in addition to the wheat they might import from America, than a depressed and starving community would without the wheat.”

He mentioned this, however, to show, that they were not so wise and benevolent in this country, in the estimation of others, as they might deem themselves ; and that if they sanctioned the precedent of nations, regulating their commerce upon such principles, that they might one day be the sufferers. But was this a principle, that any people could consistently act upon, or did they do so ? Hon. Members talked of scorn and indignation being visited upon this country by the world, if they should not adopt the resolution of the noble Lord, he thought those feelings were more likely to be visited upon those who recommended it, when it was seen, that in numberless cases, when they might adopt the same principle, they abstained from doing so, because it affected their interests, and that they were eagerly seeking to extend that very commerce in their manufactures, which, as it has been truly said, was the real cause of slave-labour being employed in order to produce what was given in exchange. When it was seen,

that in other parts of the world, we were anxiously seeking friendly and commercial relations, though slavery and the slave-trade was carried on in the most avowed and systematic manner, and under circumstances, in some particulars, of greater aggravation than they had heard of in the western world. What was the favourite policy of the other side? he wished it was less in favour on this side—that of preserving the integrity of the Turkish empire, and maintaining that people with their religion, their laws, their customs, their slaves, and their systematic traffic in slaves. Were they not ready to enter into treaty with them and to receive their produce? Had they not lately expended life and treasure on behalf of that country? And was it not part of that policy expenditure that had caused a deficiency incurred by that means? And yet they were called upon to refuse to supply that deficiency by reducing the duty on sugar, simply because it was produced by slave-labour. Was that consistent? Was that upholding what was termed a resistless principle, and standing by a great moral example, as it was called, in not holding intercourse with slave-labour countries? Why, if the world was to pass judgment on the matter, what was it to think of the mover of this resolution being the Member for the greatest mart for slave-produce in the world; seconded by an East-India director, whose friends in this cause say they must now direct all their energies to abolish slavery in the British possessions of India; and the organ of the anti-slavery party this week is teeming with evidence of the slavery that now exists in their Eastern possessions, and they quote from official documents to show, that it exists and is tolerated, owing to the apathy and indifference of the Company's servants on the subject—that this resolution is supported by men who have just disposed of and been indemnified for slave property, or indeed by those who have avowed themselves to be still slave-owners in this House? This will surely shake the confidence of other countries in their sincerity, and would be far more likely to discredit the benevolent objects of the really faithful friends of the slave, and tend to discourage other nations from acting upon their example. They were told that they must not interrupt the great experiment that was being tried in the West-India islands, but hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to be under a mistake as to the nature of the experiment to which they refer. The

great experiment was, whether the negro was really capable of freedom—whether he had any taste for the enjoyments of civilised life, and could live without that control which had been supposed to be absolutely necessary in order to make him a useful labourer. That was the great experiment to be tried by emancipation; and, as far as the result went, the experiment was tried and found satisfactory within one year after the great act had passed. It was found out they were ready to work for wages, and their labour as any where else, could be obtained for a sufficient price. This country never undertook to guard the Jamaica planter against all the contingencies arising out of the natural competition of capital and labour. Much was said about the competition of slave-labour in Cuba with the free labour in Jamaica; but in Jamaica, with an exhausted soil, competing with a fertile one in Cuba, just the same result would occur if slavery were abolished there. It was competition with more productive soils that had embarrassed the proprietors of Jamaica in the days of slavery, and would do so again though no slavery existed. But there was a term in the noble Lord's resolution which seemed to imply, that if there was not an adequate supply of sugar from our colonies that then would be the time to disregard the argument for slave-grown sugar, and to reduce the prohibitory duty. This raised the question of the means of the people of this country at present, and he did not know how it could be said that they were not in the condition when any reduction of price was of the greatest importance to them. From all parts of the country he had received the most affecting details of the sufferings of the people in the towns. A letter which he had in his hand said,—

“You may mention what are facts—that there are in Preston (and Preston is not near so depressed as some other towns) 1,220 empty houses, that the number of paupers in our union has increased 127 per cent. since 1837, besides having been relieved two winters by a public subscription. Such is the want of employment that people are begging to work for the parish at 1s. per day and their dinner. Nobody except those who are conversant with the people, can believe the number which are out of employment. Crime continues so to increase that an intermediate session is obliged to be held to dispose of it. The shopkeepers complain dreadfully, and failures are taking place every week. Something really must be done.” “The number of empty houses is—old ones, 1,110, and new ones 110; total unoccupied 1,220. The increase in the number of paupers in the Preston union who received

out-door relief from March, 1837, to March, 1840, is 83½ per cent., and from March, 1837, to 1841, is 127 per cent., being an increase in the last year of 40 per cent., while at the same time the in-door relief has been kept up to the full extent of the accommodation the work-house would admit. The distress of the poor has been relieved during the last two winters by public subscription; 1,330 families were relieved last winter with articles of bedding, such as chaff and Bolton sheets. It is the opinion of some connected with this charity that there are 2,000 families, consisting of 10,000 individuals, who have not a single woollen blanket to cover them with. From the last return of the chaplain of the House of Correction, it is stated that crime had increased 37 per cent. Indeed the increase has been such as to render an intermediate session requisite, in order to dispose of the cases. As to employment, it is impossible to say how many are unemployed, but the number is very great. Factory wages have been reduced 10 per cent. within the last six months; weavers' wages from 25 to 30 per cent. since 1836. All kinds of artisans are walking about, having nothing to do. Many classes keep up their wages by trade-unions and combinations, but in those cases half of their numbers are generally tramping the country."

From Bolton the writer of a letter said:—

"I may state generally that trade was never so universally bad as now in this district. It has been coming on four years. Within a circle of six miles of this town there are many hundreds of houses empty, and those occupied are reduced from 50 to 75 per cent. in value. Hundreds of cottagers cannot pay any rent, and distrains are daily taking place. Paupers are increasing, rates getting higher, and trade languishing. Many of the smaller class of tradesmen are with extreme difficulty lingering on, and must inevitably go down ere long, unless some substantial changes, such as Lord John proposes, are brought about, and in a short time."

From Blackburn a correspondent among other things said:—

"I understand the number of empty houses is now about 1,400, [and short time is being worked by a few mills, and amongst them Bolling's.]

From Little Bolton he begged leave to read the following:—

"The whole district of Little Bolton contained 3,203 houses; of these 409 were empty (and in November there were 1,083 empty in Great Bolton); 300 houses were visited, containing 500 beds, and occupied as follows:—23 persons without beds; 8 persons slept in one bed; 42 persons slept, 7 in a bed; 78 slept, 6 in a bed; 185 slept, 5 in a bed; 432 slept, 4 in a bed; 582 slept, 3 in a bed; 220 slept, 2 in a bed; 31 slept, 1 in a bed. Their

incomes were—1,025 averaged below 1s. 6d. per head weekly, 359 more under 2s., 165 below 2s. 6d., and the rest above 2s. 6d. weekly."

From Blackburn the following account has been transmitted:—

"There is a vast amount of misery and destitution, which is very much on the increase; and, from the evidence of collectors of rates, the comforts of the work-people in their dwellings are continually and very fast decreasing; we have no means of ascertaining anything like correctly the number of people out of work, but from the best information I can get, should say 500 to 1,000. There are none working short time, but it seems to be the general impression amongst the millowners that they must come to it very soon. There are a considerable number of houses empty, and they are on the increase, from the circumstance of a number of families living in one dwelling. From what I can gather at the towns-office, I believe that the amount of empty and excusable property (i. e. owing to poverty of occupiers) there will be an increase this year over last year of something like 60 per cent., and the increase of out-door relief is one-third more this six months than last. There are four cotton-mills not working in this town and neighbourhood, three of which are quitted, the machinery being sold out; and a machine-shop is shut up, which was considered one of the largest in the county, the parties having employed from 200 to 300 mechanics, at from 20s. to 3½ per week. We have an instance here of a fire-proof cotton mill, with eighty-six horsepower engines, and filled with machinery to supply 500 looms, with a loom-shed containing 500 looms, fifty cottages, and two good dwelling-houses, having been sold within the last two or three months for 13,000l., after originally costing very near 50,000l."

To these he would add an extract of a letter from Oldham:—

"Within the township of Oldham there are forty-eight cotton-mills and manufactories, out of which eight are entirely at a stand, or, rather, seven and two halves; and I think that those standing are an average, or nearly so, of the same number of those at work. The estimated number of houses in 1837 (and there has been very little increase since that time) was 7,853. At the present time, from the collectors of the poor-rates' return, there are upwards of 1,200 empty houses and shops, nearly one-sixth of the whole, and I know, from daily experience and observation, that a very great number of the occupants of cottages are not able to pay rent in consequence of some, or all, of the family being out of work; there are a great many cases of two or three families living together in one house in a miserable manner. The mills, houses, shops, &c., now empty in Oldham, if occupied, would yield a clear rental of not less than 12,000l. per annum. As the preceding remarks apply to the township, and almost entirely within the town, it is

proper to remark that the borough of Oldham consists of four townships, and the other townships within the borough, or immediately adjoining Oldham, are suffering equal to us. Within the limits of our gas mains there are thirteen mills entirely at a stand, and the shopkeepers and tradesmen in this town have a portion of the suffering through the hands of the empty mills without the town."

From Nottingham, it is stated, that "160 fathers of families (all operatives) are employed in mending the roads: several hundreds in improvements on the race course: 700 receive out-door relief, and there are 600 in the workhouse." The subsequent paragraph he took from a Leicester paper:—

"It was told to me yesterday, by a gentleman who actually saw it, that as he was looking out of his window into the yard behind his house, he saw a man standing over his swill tub, into which was thrown the wash, &c., for his pigs, and taking several pieces of something out, and eating them with a voracious appetite! he called to him and asked him what he was doing, but the man did not speak; he then went to him and asked him if he would like some bread to eat, and the man, with a tremulous voice, said he should be very thankful for it."

In a Bolton Newspaper he met with the following:—

"Mr. Harry Thomas, farmer, of Thirnham, near Royton, had a cow, which died last week, and not liking to sell the carcase, he buried it in a field. After it had been interred a day and a half, about twenty females, from Crompton and Shaw, near Oldham, came to see if the farmer would let them have it. After hearing their distressed circumstances, he told them they might take it if they pleased. The females disinterred the body, cut it into pieces, took it to their respective families, who ate heartily of the carrion, and have since declared the meat to be the best they have tasted for many months past."

From Manchester it was stated that no fewer than 4,000 individuals were subsisting (living he could hardly call it) upon 13½d. per week. He would not enter into details from thence, because he believed they had been given by the hon. Member for Salford. Facts of the kind were not only supplied by persons who had written private letters, but they were also furnished in painful abundance under the authority of public commissioners. Mr. Hickson, in the report of the hand-loom weavers, said, respecting what was usually considered a prosperous district of Ireland:—

"In Belfast I found the cotton weavers and others, living to a great extent, upon a diet which in England would only be used as

hog's wash. It is a liquid called sowens, made in the process of manufacturing starch. . . . The sowens is sold to the poor at the rate of a halfpenny a measure, a measure containing nearly a gallon. It is boiled, and used by them chiefly as a soup or broth for breakfast and supper. Several persons came for it while we were present, and we saw it ladled out to them. We were informed that some who had attempted to live wholly upon it, had found it fatal to their health. The quantity sold in this manner by Mr. Emerson, amounted to 6l. per week, from which it would appear that upwards of 400 persons are supplied with sowens, for food, from this establishment alone,—allowing seven gallons per week to each individual. A little flour held by the water in solution after the starch has been extracted, is the share of wheat, and a poor share it is, which these 400 persons obtain by all the present protective system. It is satisfactory that this is not a picture which applies to the majority of the working classes of England. Wheaten bread and flour are used by them as daily food, but the price at which they obtain them, by absorbing the largest proportion of their wages, compels them either to go without animal food, or to confine themselves to pork. Families of factory operatives, earning, collectively, very high wages, and our better paid classes of skilled artisans, are exceptions. But taking the whole body of agricultural labourers, supposed to derive the greatest practical benefit from our Corn-laws, beef and mutton, as articles of food among them, are almost unknown from the north of England to the south. Pork is the only description of animal food they get, and often little of that; so generally are they under-fed, that it is often very difficult to rally a constitution after an attack of fever or ague in the rural districts. I have often heard medical men say, "We give them tonic medicines, but the only physic they want is a slice of mutton or beef every day for three months, and that we cannot prescribe, for how are they to purchase meat, without denying themselves bread? When 8s. out of 15s. must be spent in bread and flour by a family, and the greater part of the rest be expended in rent, cloathing, and fuel, what is there left for animal food?"

In another part of the report of the same commissioners he met with the following paragraph:—

"A woman, the wife of a silk weaver, relating the sufferings of her family, said to me, 'Often, Sir, and often, were we obliged, when half starving, to go without a pennyworth of bread, and buy a pennyworth of coals, or take the children over to a neighbour's to borrow a warm at their fire, or put them early to bed shivering and crying with cold.'"

Elsewhere, Mr. Hickson observed:—

"I have heard the question asked, 'Which is most contrary to the will of God, to extinguish the life of a child before it has arrived



at the knowledge of good or evil, or to give a nominal consent to its existence, and say, eat, if you can find food in the spot where you were born, but for the rest of the world, the earth for you shall not yield its increase, nor shall the trees of the earth bear fruit each after its kind?"

It was to be recollected that this class of persons amounted at present to no fewer than 800,000, and it could not be wondered that hatred to the Government and constitution should prevail among them. Much had been said, about our vast dependencies, and the magnitude of our foreign possessions, but of what value could they be to these unfortunate people? What was the worth of the East Indies or the West Indies to a starving population. The people of this country were called upon to contribute taxes for the maintenance of our colonies, and soldiers for the defence of them, but hundreds and hundreds of thousands, in a time of profound peace, and for no misconduct of their own, were reduced to a state of absolute misery and destitution, and what a mockery it was to talk to them of the value of our colonies. The moment it was proposed to improve the condition of the working classes—the moment it was wished to afford them some of the comforts, not to call them luxuries, which our colonies, or other tropical countries produced—hon. Gentlemen on the other side exclaimed, "No, you shall not enjoy any of these advantages; you shall be taxed and shall bleed for the colonies, but benefit from them is beyond your reach, because we consider it essential to protect, support, and maintain monopolies." When the condition of the slaves of the West Indies, (for whom so much and such proper sympathy was felt) was contrasted with the state of the working classes in this country, he could not help quoting the sentiments of a writer who had great influence with the lower orders, derived from the force and justice of his reasoning and the truth of his statements—Mr. Cobbett.

"Poverty" (said this admirable writer) "is, after all, the great badge, the never failing badge of slavery. Bare bones and rags, are the true marks of the real slave. What is the object of Government? To cause men to live happily, which cannot be without a sufficiency of food and raiment. Good government means a state of things in which the main body are well fed and well clothed. It is the chief business of a Government to take

care that one part of the people do not cause the other part to lead miserable lives. There can be no morality, no virtue, no sincerity, no honesty, amongst a people continually suffering from want; it is cruel in the last degree to punish such people for almost any sort of crime, which is, in fact, not crime of the heart—not crime of the perpetrator—but the crime of his all-controlling necessities."

It was impossible to dispute the justice of this remark, and it ought to be borne in mind, when adverting to the comparative condition of the African slave and the English (slave he would not call him) operative, enduring at this moment such unexampled suffering. It might, however be said that what he had just read was the language of a demagogue or a democrat appealing to the feelings and passions of the uninformed: but, on the other hand, he begged to trouble the House with what had been written on the same theme, not by a democrat, but by an individual who was now a high Tory. In an article on the progress of discontent in Great Britain, by Mr. Southey, he had met with the subsequent passage:—

"We had arrived at a state in which the extremes of inequality had become intolerable and that unless the condition of the populace physical, moral, and intellectual, were improved, a *bellum servile*—a war of the poor against the rich—would be the result."

This was the language of a Conservative in 1817. What amelioration of the condition of the people has taken place since that period? He considered that he had not in any respect given an exaggerated picture of the condition of the people; he should be extremely sorry to do so, and most happy to learn from any good authority that their distresses were not as great as he apprehended. He should be most happy to find, that there was any prospect of improvement—that their sufferings were not in any respect owing to the present state of trade—and that the present state of trade was not to be attributed to the restrictions upon commerce. Last year he had stated that the manufacturing classes were in an unfortunate condition, and he had, moreover, adduced the opinions of many manufacturers that that condition was the necessary consequence of their not being allowed to exchange the produce of our own country for the produce of other countries. The warehouses of Liverpool and of other places were almost bursting with flour imported from America, which would afford

food for the starving, and enable those who were most anxious, to take that food in exchange for manufactures, and give employment to the distressed. Under these circumstances some strong ground should be stated for continuing the restrictions complained of, and for maintaining that the condition of the African slave was better worth our care than that of our own population. But what prospect is there for the people? We are now (continued Mr. Villiers) going to a division—perhaps to a dissolution. I hope we are. It is generally expected that the project of Government for affording some comforts to the working classes, instead of adding to their burdens, will be negatived—that on a division Ministers are to be defeated. The division lists will appear on the morrow. [*Cheers.*] The right hon. Baronet (Sir E. Knatchbull) is pleased with that observation, and his name, no doubt, will appear in the majority; I hope that some time will then be allowed to the people to reflect on the conduct of those who compose that majority. I do not say so because I wish to mark the names of the majority; no doubt they think they faithfully represent their constituents; but a question of great importance is connected with this point. We are living in times when people are not regardless of politics—when the great mass of the population of the kingdom is putting forward its claim to be included in the political system, and will mark the conduct of those who claim on this occasion to represent them. The great body of the population assert that they are not represented, and put forward claims for representation. What is it that they are told? That they are virtually represented—that the electors are trustees for the rest of the community and that those who have the right of voting will judge of the manner in which Members discharge their duty. If ever there was a time then, when these representatives were put upon their trial, and when Parliament could be fairly tested, it is the present; and if ever there was an occasion when the general interests of the community, and the particular claims of those who assert their right to the suffrage were entitled to consideration, it is the present. No one is less desirous of meddling with the constitutional powers of the country than myself, but there must be some limit to the argument that the House does virtually represent the whole body of the people;

we cannot constantly tell the people that there has been a gross breach of trust on the part of the Members of the House, and yet constantly refuse them redress by extending the suffrage. It seems to me that we are rapidly approaching the period, when, if we do not do justice to the people, the people will claim to do justice to themselves. What is now likely to occur? What do Gentlemen hope and expect on the other side of the House will follow the division? That one set of men will be substituted for another in the Government of the country. I do not believe that the people care from whom the good comes, if it be good; but before they are called upon to depose one set of men who propose to give them something good, they will require to hear what are the principles of the other set of men, and to be informed distinctly what are the benefits they intend to confer. The present Ministers tell us what they will do; will the prospective Ministers do more? and if so, what will they do? During the whole of the seven nights' discussion we have heard of nothing from the other side, but what is hostile to the interests of the suffering classes. Some hon. Member went so far as to assert that there is no distress, or, at all events, nothing new in the distress; a West-India planter insisted that he had not had indemnity enough; he said one hundred millions more was due. I see before me, an hon. Baronet who is identified with another question which would add to the burdens of the people. I mean Church extension. He is a Member who would naturally have great influence with a Government composed of his party, and he would add to the burdens of the people; but what promise do they make of any relief to the people? I know of much evil, I want to hear of the promise of some good. The people are bent upon having these restrictions upon commerce removed. What says the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire? He is against free trade. What says the right hon. Baronet? "I will resist any plan which proposes an abandonment of the protection to agriculture." There is, therefore no hope from that quarter. At present we may say, there are three parties in the State. 1. Those who are for keeping things just as they are. 2. Those who think that justice ought to be done to the people, and who hope to do that justice, and yet preserve the constitution. 3. Those whom hope deferred has made sick, and who call

for a change in the constitution. I understand the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, to put himself at the head of the second party. He wishes to do justice to the people, with a proper regard to the existing constitution. That is a prominent and worthy place, befitting his name and character, and he has shown that he possesses talents, information, and experience, to make him the leader of such a party. In that capacity, he has set himself against monopoly, and in favour of the general interests of the nation, and we have every reason to expect success under his conduct. I think that the commercial and manufacturing classes, and all those who complain of restriction, will do well to keep the noble Lord at their head. I say this quite independently, and with a view only to the advantage of the interests I have hitherto advocated. If the noble Member for North Lancashire, or the right hon. Baronet, had avowed themselves the warm supporters of those interests, I should have said precisely the same. They have taken an opposite course, while the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) has avowed himself the champion of general interests, and, in my judgment, the people would be unwise indeed if they repudiated his leadership. I trust that he will not be deterred by the silly taunt that he has proposed this change at a moment which is inopportune, especially when the objection comes from those who have warned us that they will resist such measures at whatever time they may be brought forward. I trust, too, that the noble Lord will be nothing daunted by the reproach, that he has proposed a measure which will array and excite one interest against another. This is not the fault of those who have recommended the change; it is one of the cursed consequences of such laws, that they do set one class in array against the other. But that is an argument in favour of any tyranny at any time; it was as good in 1641, as in 1841, and we know that our ancestors had the spirit to disregard such fears. The gentry of that day resisted the encroachments of the Crown on a matter somewhat similar to the present—unjust taxation. The endeavour was to tax the people for the benefit of the Crown, without regard to principle or to their interests. That is what the aristocracy would now claim against the community at large; and I cannot believe that the commercial and indus-

trious classes will show themselves degenerate sons of those who sowed the seeds of liberty in our soil, and established it in the other hemisphere; and I trust, that if the noble Lord is now defeated, that he will not expose himself to the reproach of refusing to those classes throughout the country a full opportunity of expressing their opinions on this great question.

Sir *E. Knatchbull* did not pretend to follow the hon. Member who had last addressed the House through his elaborate speech, for if he did so, he should be obliged to speak upon many subjects foreign to the question before them. The hon. Member in the course of his speech, had touched upon almost every topic which could be entertained by the House; but in the observations which he should feel it necessary to make, he should confine himself within a narrower compass, and he trusted the House would afford him a patient hearing. Allusion had already been made to the great length to which the debate had been carried, and he could assure the House that he regretted that the debate should have been so long protracted. Not that he was unwilling the question should be fully and deliberately discussed and thoroughly investigated in all its bearings, for the judgement of the country—but he lamented that eight nights had been occupied in that discussion, as he was of opinion that great public interests of the country must have felt themselves affected during that period. He thought that some responsibility attached to her Majesty's Ministers for not having used the influence which they possessed with their supporters, in order to put an end to the debate at an earlier period. There were many subjects alluded to by the hon. Gentleman who spoke last upon which he joined issue. However, when the hon. Member said, he thought that the time was come for stating what hon. Gentlemen intended, he agreed with him. He thought that the time had come when the Ministers of the Crown ought to state what their intentions were. The hon. Gentleman said he was opposed to all protection. Now, in that respect, he could not agree with the hon. Member. The hon. Member stated that the manufacturers were ready to support that proposition. Was that the case? He would ask the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it were possible? He would ask that right hon.

Gentlemen were not duties upon some articles necessary to the revenue? Had it not been stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself that a certain amount of duty on corn and other articles was necessary to raise an additional amount of revenue of 400,000*l.* With respect to the sugar-duties, the conclusion which he came to was that in all probability the revenue expected to arise from that proposition would be secured, but he thought also that, without such a proposition being carried into effect, the increased consumption that would arise from the increased supply which was anticipated from our possessions would produce a great increase in the revenue. This was the opinion expressed by his right hon. Friend the Member for Cambridge the other night, and a most undue meaning had been attributed to the language of his right hon. Friend, as if he had spoken of duties generally, whereas he had only referred to the sugar duties. The Member for Cambridge University, had stated, that he would let the sugar duties alone. Gentlemen opposite, had charged him with declaring, that he would apply this principle to all the interests of the country, and to all the duties of Government—could anything be more unfair? The right hon. Judge Advocate had misstated this the other evening, but upon the explanation of his right hon. Friend had with the candour and manliness of his character admitted his error. Nevertheless, the hon. Member for Kilkenny and one of the Lords of the Treasury had again repeated the misrepresentation. Such had been the conduct of the other side in this debate, and it was right that the country should know it. With respect to the subject of slavery, as connected with the question before the House, he was utterly astonished to see, that hon. Gentlemen opposite gave up those principles which they before entertained upon that subject. He had always been opposed to that most inhuman traffic and, when on former occasions he had heard opposition to the slave-trade expressed, he thought that the whole black creation was included in the sympathy which was indicated, and that it was not confined to the slaves of our own colonies. Whether or not it was expedient to act upon the principles proposed by her Majesty's Government, the present was the worst moment that could be chosen to

bring forward propositions of the kind. When the noble Lord opposite was reminded of the injury that those measures might inflict in the present state of Canada he told the House that he had been in communication with the Governor of Canada upon that subject, and that noble Lord stated, that, if the Timber duties were altered, it would place him in difficulties that he might not be able to meet; but that, if an alteration of the Timber Duties was accompanied by other measures (meaning no doubt a repeal of the Corn-laws), in that case, the Governor-general of Canada would not fear to encounter any difficulties that might present themselves. He thought that it was conduct highly deserving of censure for a Government to come forward and propose measures to Parliament without any expectation of being able to carry them. Did the noble Lord opposite, when he made his statement entertain the least expectation that he would be able to carry through that House, a measure, for repealing the Corn-laws? He knew that the voice of the country was against him, and the noble Lord knew that he was deceiving the country, and deceiving the Governor-general of Canada when he made that proposition. The ground on which he and those who thought with him rested, and which they thought the only grounds that could be wisely acted upon, were, that it would not be safe to allow a country like this to be dependent on foreign nations for a supply of the first necessities of life. He believed that was the safe principle to act on, and one which would be the most beneficial to all classes of her Majesty's subjects. He would refer to the opinions of Mr. Canning on this subject, which set forth the sound view of the question in language more impressive than any which he could use. Mr. Canning said:—

"It seems perfectly clear that the duty, to be an effectual protection on the one hand, and not an undue burden on the other, must vary with the price of corn."

On this principle he (Sir E. Knatchbull) was directly opposed to the proposition of a fixed duty of 8*s.* the quarter. He contended that 8*s.* was no protection at all. Why, what did the hon. Member for Marylebone say the last night of the debate? That he supported the proposition of the Government to have a duty of 8*s.*, because he knew that that duty could not long be continued, and that in the

and they must get rid of all protection whatever. How, then was it possible for him (Sir E. Knatchbull) to entertain the propositions of her Majesty's Government? He was surprised at some opinions that had been expressed last night by the hon. Member for West Kent, and the Member for Hertfordshire; and he could not well understand the principles on which the conduct of both those hon. Members rested. They told the House that they considered that protection to agriculture was essentially necessary, and yet these Members for two counties gave their unqualified support on all occasions and on this occasion, to her Majesty's Ministers, who by every means in their power, were advocating, and promoting, the very measures which they themselves so strongly condemned. All that he could say was, that the conduct of both these hon. Members was most inconsistent, and he rejoiced to add that there was another tribunal beyond that House where they would be afforded the opportunity of explaining their conduct. He regretted that he did not then see the hon. Member for Wolverhampton in his place. Nothing was more unfair than for an hon. Member to come down to that House and make a long speech, treating of all subjects, and referring to all parties, and when he had done, to leave the House. Frequently, during the course of this lengthened discussion, he had seen the Ministerial benches entirely empty. If eight nights' debate were requisite upon this question, such should not have been the case. He was desirous that all questions of this kind should be decided on the principle of what was best to be done for the people of this country. The hon. Member for Wolverhampton had expatiated on the deep distress which the people suffered. He did not deny, that great distress prevailed; but he certainly must beg to say, that the Gentlemen who sat on his side of the House entertained as deep sympathy for those who suffered that distress, and were as active in relieving it, as any other Members on the other side of the House. However, admitting the existence of this distress, he should be glad to ask in what way the repeal of the Corn-laws would benefit the agricultural community? Supposing the price of corn to be 60s. the quarter, there could be no doubt that if the price went down to 40s. the quarter the

people would be better able to purchase it, provided they had the same wages as when the price was at 60s. Take the rate of wages at 13s. 6d. a-week, and corn at 60s. the quarter; a labouring man could support his family with a bushel of corn, the price of which would be 7s. 6d., and, deducting this from the 13s. 6d., he would have a clear surplus remaining of 6s. for all the comforts and necessaries of life. But if, according to the theory of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, the duties were abolished, the price would be about 40s., but wages would fall in the same proportion. Instead of 13s. 6d. per week, the labouring man would receive but 9s. For the bushel of wheat, at 40s. the quarter, he would have to pay 5s., and there would then only remain 4s. instead of 6s. for the comforts of life. Now he appealed to the House whether he would not be better off with 6s. a week than 4s. It is certain, that if the price of corn falls, the wages of labour will fall also. In this opinion I have the authority of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Villiers) himself; to the following effect he spoke at Birmingham:—

"One of the disadvantages we sustain in competing with the foreign manufacturers is, that we are much more heavily taxed. Half of our income is devoted to the support of our public establishments—the army and navy, and the supplies of ships in the dock-yards. The cost of provisions enters into every one of these, and, in proportion as the price of bread is reduced, are savings effected in all these items. Can any one doubt that we are paying more to every public servant than would be necessary if provisions were lower? What is the great amount of our local burdens—the poor-rates and county rates—composed of, but the cost of supporting a certain number of persons in public institutions and gaols? Every local tax must consequently be increased, by whatever increases the cost of provisions."

It is to be presumed, that Gentlemen who agree with the Member for Wolverhampton, are prepared to act accordingly—the salaries of all public officers must be reduced—the pay of the army and navy must be subject to the same principle—every man's income, even the labourers must be reduced—if the Government are not prepared to act on this principle, they ought to be opposed to the hon. Gentleman. He wished to read to the House, the situation of the country as it is expected to be, when the principles of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Villiers) shall prevail—the following is an

extract from a publication of the Anti-Corn-law League:—

"Be in no fear that the farmers would be ruined by a repeal of the Corn-laws. With free trade, in twenty-five years, Manchester, and all the surrounding towns within seven miles of its Exchange, would be one great city. With free trade, England, Ireland and Scotland would be one great grazing and dairy farm, studded with thriving towns. With free trade, Northern Europe and Northern America would be our corn fields, France and Spain, and Portugal, our vineyards. With free trade, the nations would convert the sword into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, and men would learn the art of war no more!

Thus it appears, that the agriculture of the country was to be destroyed—the capital embarked was to be sunk—the farmer and his labourers were to be reduced to ruin—and England was to be entirely dependent on foreign countries for corn—this was the state of things which the advocates of liberal measures anticipate and desire—it was to this state of things, which for the sake of the farmer, for the sake of his labourers and for the sake of his country, he was opposed. Taking into consideration the great improvements in agriculture, only now in their infancy, he was satisfied that the capability of this country to supply corn would be rapidly extended, and for several years back, there was no period during which corn had maintained so steady a price. If by a free trade in corn, they made this country dependent on other nations for a supply of the first necessary of life, the time might come when they would have to lament so fatal an error. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on a former occasion, asked the Gentlemen at that (the Opposition) side of the House, when they objected to the measures of the Government, what measures were they prepared to bring forward to meet the present difficulties? The right hon. Gentleman even went so far as to say, that in all cases of difficulty and emergency the country had a right to look to that House. He had always thought that the initiation of all measures rested on the responsible advisers of the Crown, and he had never yet heard that a Government had the right to call upon the Opposition for the production of measures. The practice of that House and of the country, had heretofore been the reverse of such a course as that. The public had always looked to the Ministers of the Crown for

such measures as the country required. These measures were proposed to Parliament, and if the Gentlemen who brought them forward failed in obtaining the approval of Parliament, they generally had the decency and decorum to refuse to press any longer on the attention of the Legislature, measures which they knew they could not carry, and to propose which must be productive of great inconvenience and confusion. He was not of the number of those who despaired of the country. He placed the greatest reliance on the strength and spirit of the good sense of the people. He placed the fullest confidence in the intelligence and sound judgment of the people of this country. He knew that they possessed a fund of good sense, in which the utmost confidence might be placed. He believed, above all, that the country required, a strong and efficient Government, and that in such hands they would be able to continue to uphold the character of this country, and to maintain the interests and secure the happiness of all classes of her Majesty's subjects.

Mr. Charles Buller had never experienced deeper disappointment at any speech that he had ever heard in that House, than at the speech of the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down, particularly when at the end of that speech the right hon. Baronet so cruelly denied that information, for which, in the earlier part, he had given the House some reason to hope. The right hon. Baronet complained of the discursive nature of this discussion, and promised to confine himself within a narrow compass; if the right hon. Gentleman meant by the term narrow, that he would keep on the outside of the question before the House, and would not discuss the question of the sugar duties, he had completely performed the promise he had made. He did not mean to pursue the same course; he hoped, that there would be other opportunities of discussing the Corn-laws, when the right hon. Baronet would be able to dilate upon the dreadful state to which England would be reduced when this country should be converted into smiling pastures and flourishing towns, and when the din of war should be no more heard. But the right hon. Baronet had not been content with making his own statements; he had gone deeply into authorities, and he had taunted those on that (the Ministerial) side with inconsistency. He wondered, that the word did not choke the right

hon. Gentleman. He wondered, that when the word was to be uttered the lips did not refuse to give it utterance; and that there had not come out instead, "malt-tax repeal." The right hon. Gentleman had found nothing but deception among his opponents, as he had once done among his present friends; and he could not help thinking that the right hon. Gentleman had returned to his old modes of thinking, and that the whole of his changes might be summed up in the well-remembered exclamation *nusquam tuta fides*. He did not intend to enter into all the positions of hon. Gentlemen opposite; he thought, that the arguments which had been used against her Majesty's Government were so special in their nature, that when they had been already once or twice refuted, there was no occasion for any other person to refer to them. Above all things, however, the doctrine embraced in the resolution of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, with respect to slavery was a doctrine of the most refined and exaggerated fanaticism that he had ever heard in any country, and he need not discuss it till he found some one on that or the other side of the House get up to avow it. The doctrine was of value only in proportion to the consistent rigidity with which it was acted up to with respect to all countries, and to the produce of every country where slavery existed; and he would not discuss it, whilst he found no Gentleman on either side of the House value his consistency upon the subject a single pinch of snuff. As to hon. Gentlemen opposite, who opposed the present application of the principle of free-trade, as abstract lovers of that principle, they had been forced, for their argument, to carry their doctrines to a height which he had never expected to find them carried in the present century; they had carried it to the height, not only of maintaining, but of creating protection to trade. For what else was the argument with respect to the East-Indian trade? At any rate, the exportation of sugar from the East Indies was not an ancient trade; there were no vested interests there; there had not, as yet, been any large amount of capital embarked in it, for our unwise laws had done everything to discourage the cultivation; and yet the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Cambridge, now came down and told them to take care of the fertile valley of the Ganges, that these were the interests, that they ought to encourage, and that they ought to give this

encouragement, not by keeping up, but by creating protective duties. And for whose benefit were these protective duties to be imposed? They might benefit the great capitalists, whose capital had been diverted from the West Indies to the East Indies; but would any one tell him that it would be any advantage to the labourers in the East Indies? If there were any curse that they could impose upon that country, it would be by diverting the industry into such channels as these. They would be inducing the people of the East Indies to enter into competition with other sugar not in the free markets of Europe, but they would confine all their exertions to a competition with other colonies, under protective laws with the mother country alone. So that by the time capital should be applied largely to the cultivation of sugar in the East Indies the producers would be liable to all the fluctuations caused by our protective duties at home. He said, then, in the name of the people of India, "Do not inflict this curse upon us." We had inflicted injury enough upon that country; we had interfered with their religious ceremonies; we had subjected them to great and heavy taxation; we had destroyed their ancient manufactures of muslin and of cotton; we had driven them out of their own markets by the introduction of our manufactures, whilst we refused to take their produce, but of all the curses we could inflict, the worst would be fostering and protecting a forced industry. It seemed, also, that we were to be induced to foster the cultivation of sugar in the East Indies and in the West, not alone by the usual arguments in support of monopoly—although these had not been forgotten by hon. Gentlemen opposite, because they told them that monopoly was the best thing to secure low prices, and that if monopoly should be maintained, there would be no want of a large supply of West-Indian sugar at the lowest price; but we were to foster the growth of sugar in the East Indies and in the West Indies, to prevent the consumption of sugar, the produce of slave-labour. Why, no one was chimerical enough to believe, that if we refused to take the sugar of the Brazils, we should thereby put an end to slavery. No one was fanatical enough in his views to declare that we ought not to take any produce of slave-labour. The only plausible ground for continuing the monopoly was, on account of the experiment we were trying in the West Indies;

but this was a most dangerous course to adopt, because we were placing the success of this great experiment upon a basis that was sure to disappoint us. When emancipation had been granted by us we ought to have foreseen that a portion of industry would be diverted from the cultivation of exportable produce. What had they seen in Jamaica? An old colony in which the sugar land had been nearly worn out, the demand for labour was large, and the population having taken to the cultivation of other land, and the raising of other produce, the quantity of sugar for exportation had fallen off. In Berbice, and Antigua, on the contrary, the price of labour was low, the land was good, and the proprietors were enabled to compete with the produce of other countries. No one had heard that in Berbice, in Antigua, or in Trinidad, they had not been able to compete with slave-grown sugar. He found it expressly stated by Mr. Burnley, that the demand of the people of Trinidad was "free us from all restriction, and we shall be able to compete with any country in the world." But Mr. Burnley was unlike other West-India planters, for the instant the emancipation of the negroes was effected he took care to procure a supply of free labour, and he might now venture to invite competition with the world. But after all, it was not upon the mere question of the sugar-trade that the House was called upon to discuss this subject, but there were other relaxations of our duties which were proposed, and the consideration of which was of the utmost importance. The House must look at those circumstances which rendered the adoption of a system of free trade imperative upon the Government. The real vital importance which pressed the relaxation of the commercial code upon the Government was the absolute necessity which prevailed for adopting free trade, as a means of maintaining the existing markets for the export trade which this country enjoyed. He wondered sometimes whether hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, who talked so lightly of the necessity of maintaining the foreign markets for the manufactures of this country, had ever inquired what it was that supported the immense population of this country. What was it, he asked, but the superiority of those trades which we carried on for the purpose of raising exports to sell to foreigners? There was one fact which appeared to him to afford a striking piece of evidence upon this subject; it had been frequently mentioned,

but it could not be too often pointed out as proving the immense importance of the maintenance of our export trade. They all knew the great increase of the manufacturing produce of this country—the great increase of the cotton and the hardware trades—which were our export trades. It was our exports, therefore, which enabled us to support our population—it was upon the maintenance of that department of our trade that the support of these two and a half millions of our fellow-countrymen depended. Let them, then, destroy our export markets before they raised up new ones, and our population, instead of being the most prosperous in Europe, would be the most beggarly and the most suffering. He, therefore, conceived that an English Ministry really estimating the importance of those great interests to which he had referred, and duly alive to the welfare of our population, could view nothing with so much terror as the destruction of any of the present markets for our manufactures. When we knew that our trade with the Brasils, and with the United States was in jeopardy—that both those states were about to revise their commercial codes, and to retort upon this country, he thought that every other consideration must give way, and that the Government was right in taking this opportunity of coming to the House and saying, "we must no longer falter on this subject, and keep up the system of restriction, but we must adopt a system of free-trade, in order that our people may live." A great deal had been said about the exceeding inconvenience of the time at which this question had been brought forward. For his own part he had never yet found the time at which it was convenient for monopolists to give up their long enjoyed privileges; and whether the change was proposed in the time of high or of low prices, they could always turn round on the Government and say, "you have taken the wrong time to make this change; you should have proposed it at some more favourable opportunity." Hon. Gentlemen opposite affected to sneer at the success of the agitation which had been created on the subject of the corn-laws. He could only say that the effect of the proposition which had been brought forward upon the minds of the people of this country had been much more rapid than he could have anticipated, for he had never imagined that a question of so much magnitude, and presenting such an infinite variety of topics, would have been so immediately taken up



as this had been. But he begged hon. Gentlemen to consider that it was in the nature of such an excitement as this to go on increasing, and he entreated them to reflect on what the consequences of a continuance of the excitement might be. It certainly could not continue with anything like calm results, if the question of the corn-laws long remained in agitation in this country. He could not believe that any subject so dangerous could long continue to agitate the country, because it was a question with which men's interests and men's feelings were most strongly connected. Hon. Gentlemen told the House that a strong excitement prevailed—that the Chartists were against the proposition which was made, and one would almost think that the hon. Member for Northampton had them all in his pocket; but he said that this was not one of those questions on which it was wise for the Government to yield for any time, and that it would not be wise for them to let the question be long discussed among the people. Whatever might be the sophistries by which the Corn-laws were defended, and upon which it was contended that they would produce lower prices in the end, the people would see inevitably that they were sought to be retained merely for the purpose of benefiting the governing classes of the community. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had thrown the blame of mooted this question upon the Government, but he said, that they were defended in the course which they had taken by the general opinion of the thinking classes, and by the general opinion of the working and manufacturing classes of this country; that they were justified in it by the feelings of the great mass of the people, who demanded a relaxation of the present system. He assured the House that he opposed most strenuously such appeals to the people, he deprecated the moving of such things in the popular mind, but he said that those who produced the excitement were the monopolists themselves, and not those who came forward to fight against those monopolists in favour of the great masses of their fellowcountrymen. But, notwithstanding the length to which this debate had been protracted, and the opportunities afforded to hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the course which they intended to pursue, the House was still ignorant whether they took their stand on the maintenance of all existing monopolies, or whether they only intended to oppose that

in opposition which they would support when they came into power. He should hope that a course so unworthy as this would not be taken, and he should hope that, before hon. Gentlemen opposite pretended to come forward to dispossess the Government of their present positions upon such a question as this, they would let the country see on what grounds and for what purpose they were proceeding, and on what principle they intended to carry on the Government if they should succeed in obtaining it. But there was one thing which he thought that the Government could do—they could force hon. Gentlemen opposite to explain what they meant to do explicitly—if not by word of mouth, by their votes. The Government did not take up this matter for the interest of party, or of official men, but for the great interests of the country, and they could only prove the worthiness with which they had taken it up, by persevering steadfastly in their course, with a view ultimately to secure the object which they had in view. Whatever imputations could be thrown upon the motives of the Government, the House might be sure that the people would not heed them, because they might be sure that the country would see that they were battling for a good cause, which would justify an obstinate struggle. Let them force from hon. Gentlemen opposite, by their votes, an indication of what they meant to do. If they would not give cheap sugar, would they give cheap timber? If they would not give cheap timber, would they give cheap coffee? and, above all, if they would not give cheap coffee, let them see whether they would give cheap bread. In the course of this discussion, either by very shame, or by some inadvertence, he hoped that the House would elicit from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, how it was that they meant to provide for the national expenditure, and if they refused to increase the revenue by diminishing the burdens of the people, that, at least, they would explain to the people what new burdens they were about to put upon them. He had no hesitation in forming a conclusion as to the result of this struggle. He had seen many changes in the course of his political career; he had seen powerful Ministers of the day, powerful also in opposition—measures which, at one period, hardly found support, in another year carried by acclamation; but he had never seen the permanent failure of any great and popular cause, taken up by

a great party in that House; year after year he had seen such principles taken up by small minorities, but as time advanced the minorities increased, and the measures were at last triumphantly carried, asserting the power of popular principles and popular justice. He had never battled under better auspices than now. They had, on the part of the Government, the distinct and clearly-expressed unanimous opinion of every writer and thinker upon this subject [*Cheers*]; he repeated, of every writer and thinker upon this subject whose name was known to him. Perhaps hon. Gentlemen opposite might name some person whom he had forgotten; but the Government had on its side the precepts and the policy of the greatest of our modern statesmen—the wants and the distresses of a suffering people—the sense of justice, and the revolting against injustice of that people, who complained that their comforts were diminished in order to provide for the luxuries of an aristocracy; they had these things on their side, and he would venture to say, that those who fought under their standard would be sure to conquer.

Sir R. Peel said,\* this, Sir, is not the first time that I have felt the extreme embarrassment of being called upon to address you when every argument and every topic which could be converted into the semblance of an argument have been exhausted. And, I should have been perfectly content to relinquish all claim on the attention of the House, if I did not feel convinced, that the whole House, without reference to party distinctions, will acknowledge, that it is not fitting, that I should permit this debate to close without the expression of my sentiments. If it be the general opinion of the House, that I have no alternative but to address them on this occasion, I am sure the same feeling will also induce hon. Gentlemen to grant me, whilst I do address them, their indulgent attention. Sir, I shall first apply myself to the proper subject of debate—the question which is involved in the resolution which has been moved by my hon. Friend. That resolution implies an opinion on the part of this House, that, considering the sacrifices which we have made for the abolition of the slave-trade and of slavery, it is not expedient to sanction the proposal for introducing into the market of the United Kingdom sugar which is the production of slave labour. And, Sir, after all the ability

which has been exhibited in opposition to that principle, my opinion remains the same, that it would not be for the interest nor for the honour of this country to open our market to sugar the produce of slave labour. Sir, I should give my vote on this question apart from all other considerations. If I had heard nothing about Corn-laws, if I had heard nothing about timber duties, I should have been prepared on the abstract merits of this particular question earnestly to support the resolution of my noble Friend. I will state the grounds on which I give that resolution my support. I do not support it on the assumption, that there is some overpowering moral obligation which compels us to abstain altogether from the consumption of the produce of slavery. I do not recognise that principle—I do not charge the right hon. Gentleman opposite with any unheard-of violation of moral duty in bringing forward this proposition. I myself have voted for the reduction of duties on articles of consumption the produce of slave-labour. I have voted for the reduction of the duties on cotton for the purpose of encouraging the manufactures of this country. I supported the right hon. Gentleman opposite last year in the proposal he made for getting rid of the absurd system of sending coffee, the produce of Brazil and of Venezuela, round by the Cape of Good Hope, in order to introduce it here at a lower rate of duty. I gave him my support on that proposition, and it was not in consequence of any opposition from me, that the right hon. Gentleman subsequently abandoned it. Prudential considerations may enter into the discussion of questions of this nature. Reference may be had to the preponderance of good or evil. If, by excluding cotton, I should reduce thousands and tens of thousands in this country to a state of starvation, should paralyse the greatest branch of our manufacturing industry, should undermine the foundations of our national strength—I cannot admit, that I am morally bound to entail such enormous evils on my country, because the cotton I require is the produce of slave labour. If such considerations may influence my judgment as to the admission of cotton, I cannot insist, that they shall be altogether excluded in determining the question of sugar. But after giving their fair weight to these considerations—after attempting to adjust this balance of good and evil—I have made up my mind in favour of this continued exclusion of sugar, the produce of slave labour. Sir, my con-

\* From a corrected report published by Murray.

viction mainly rests on a consideration of the state of the West Indies, and of the progress of the great experiment of slave emancipation in those colonies. I do not ask you to continue this exclusion for the purpose of supporting the interests of individual West-India proprietors. I admit, that your liberality has been so great, that that if their individual pecuniary interests were alone concerned, you would have a right to call on them to sacrifice those personal interests to considerations of public advantage. But, Sir, I forget their individual interests in the much higher considerations that are involved in this question. I look to the moral and social condition of that part of your empire in which you have recently made the greatest, the most hazardous, and, as I admit, with cordial satisfaction, the most successful experiment which has ever been made in civilized society. And can I conceal from myself what may be the consequence if, at this time, when society in these colonies is staggering under the shock of that experiment, you take a step which may decide for ever, that sugar shall no longer be produced at a profit by free labour in those colonies? Sir, the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Liskeard says, that it is a matter of utter indifference whether sugar should continue to be produced in certain of the old colonies of this empire. "Abandon," says the hon. Gentleman, "abandon the cultivation of sugar in Jamaica—confine it to Demerara and Barbice." Is that, then, Sir, the point of view in which hon. Gentlemen opposite consider the interests of the great colony of Jamaica, and of other of the old colonies of this empire? Is it a matter of utter indifference what becomes of the capital invested in the cultivation of sugar? Is it just to tell the capitalists and proprietors of Jamaica, that emancipation made it necessary, that they should incur great additional expense for the moral and intellectual improvement of the negroes who were about to be liberated—that it was necessary for the social welfare of the colony, that they should burthen themselves with the expenses of increased establishments for the purposes of education, police, and justice—that at this critical moment, the welfare of the liberated slaves depends on the increased exertions and expenditure of the colonists is it just, after having called on them to make these sacrifices, to inform them, that it is a matter of no concern, whether sugar cultivation be continued in Jamaica? Can we see with indifference Jamaica reduced

to the condition of St. Domingo? Can we see the negroes become the proprietors of all the land in that colony, and content themselves with such a degree of cultivation as will not produce them one single article in the shape of export from that colony? Is this the result which the hon. Gentleman contemplates from the adoption of his principles of free trade? Is this to be the result of that great experiment of emancipation which has been proclaimed to be so successful? Is this to be the great and striking example which we are to hold up to the imitation of all other countries? The example, in point of fact, which the hon. Gentleman would have the greatest colony of England exhibit is, the expulsion of the white population from the island, and the occupation of the soil by negroes, content with the bare necessities of life—the mere agricultural produce of the country—who are to raise no one exportable commodity—who can, therefore, have no trade with England: and this, this is the happy condition which the hon. Member for Liskeard anticipates with joy—this is the state to which the hon. Gentleman would reduce that population which has so largely excited the sympathies of the people of this country! The hon. Member tells us that there is not a writer—not a man of the slightest authority—who has given an opinion in contradiction to his own. The hon. Gentleman says he can refer to a witness of the highest character and of the greatest experience—Mr. Burnley. On the instant I will refute him from the mouth of his own witness. I have, by mere accident, an extract from the published opinions of Mr. Burnley—and of course the hon. Gentleman will attach special weight to those opinions. Mr. Burnley says:—

"That unless the power of combined labour be ensured, either by immigration or some other means, against the termination of slavery in 1840, the capital invested in those expensive works and machinery set up for the cultivation of sugar must perish; and in his opinion, unless the system under consideration be established before 1840, the most mischievous consequences must ensue."

["Date, date," from Mr. C. Buller.] I am reading from Mr. Burnley's evidence before the East-India Committee, q. 1,418. [Mr. C. Buller here made some observation which did not reach the gallery] Why, does the hon. Gentleman imagine that if he prevents the export of produce from Jamaica, if he makes the slaves con-

tent with the mere agricultural produce which they can raise from the soil, immigration of labour will flow into Jamaica? Mr. Burnley further went on to say,

“That there was not a man living in Porto Rico, Cuba, and the United States, who did not believe that ruinous prices must arise in 1840 in the British West Indies; and that if the first commencement of the experiment of free labour in those colonies should prove disastrous, it would create such an unfavourable impression through the world as no subsequent efforts would be able to remove.”

Now, Sir, having read to the hon. Gentleman the evidence of his own witness, I have another authority for him, to which I think he will be disposed to pay equal attention. [“Now it is coming!” from Mr. Brotherton.] What is coming? Oh! you have heard, then, of the Manchester pamphlet, have you? Sir, I had an interview with three intelligent gentlemen who formed a deputation from the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester. They called on me to advocate the principles of free trade. I told them that while I must reserve for my place in Parliament the declaration of my own opinions on any of the subjects which they brought under my consideration, I was perfectly ready to hear with the greatest attention men for whose extensive experience and personal character I had high respect. Towards the conclusion of the interview, a particular wish was expressed that I would read a certain pamphlet on the extension of slavery, and to which I was assured that I should attach great importance. I made a promise that whatever might be my avocations I would read that pamphlet, and I confess that I entered on its perusal with no little anxiety after the assurance I had received from such high authority that it was difficult to resist its conclusions. From Mr. Ashworth, a gentleman of great ability, and one of the deputation from the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester, I received the pamphlet in question, with a note, which I will read:—

“Esteemed Friend—Herewith I send thee a pamphlet of William Greg” (the brother, I believe, of the hon. Member for Manchester; a gentleman of great ability, and, as I am told, of great authority on the West India question), “which I commend to thy attentive perusal. I do not hear that either Sir F. Buxton or any of his adherents ever attempted an answer, merely remarking that such reasoning is cold philanthropy.”

Now, Sir, towards the close of this

pamphlet I find a discussion on this very question, namely the policy of importing into England sugar from Cuba and Brazil. I find an impartial view taken of the merits of the question—I find it stated,

“That the planters have no right to demand, and, moreover, to expect, that the British nation can permanently or long continue the payment of the enormous prices which have of late been charged for two of the most indispensable articles of general consumption, and that the welfare of our own population, as well as that of the negro population, requires some alteration in this respect; that, with relation to the interests of our manufacturers, we ought to consider that the Brazils were large consumers of our fabrics, but would not long remain so if this country continued to refuse the reception of their principal articles of produce in exchange; and that we ought not to endanger the interests of one class of the community to promote those of another.”

Now, then, hear what is said by this gentleman so connected with the manufacturing interests, the chosen champion of the Manchester Chamber of Commerce—one who entertains a due regard for the value of the Brazil market, and also for the interests of the British consumer. This is evidently a gentleman who is prepared to take an enlarged and a liberal view of this question even according to the notions of the Member for Liskeard. And what is the conclusion to which this gentleman comes?—He says:—

“Few things can be more certain than that the ceasing of the sugar cultivation in our colonies, and the consequent destruction of the capital now invested therein, would lead to the complete abandonment of them by the white population, who would carry to more hopeful lands their knowledge, their energy, and all their capital. Not only would emancipation singularly fail, so far as the moral condition of the negro is concerned, but the effects which it was expected to operate on slavery in other countries, and the anticipated good consequences that were expected to flow from our example, would be wholly lost.”

And now I beg the special attention of the hon. Gentleman opposite. The pamphlet goes on to say, that,

“If ever the negro population of the West Indies shall become squatters and cultivators of waste ground, instead of labourers for hire, slavery and the slave-trade will then have received the last and greatest encouragement which it is possible for them to receive.”

Mr. Greg foresaw the argument that would be raised, that we consume slave-grown

tobacco and coffee, and could not therefore consistently refuse to receive sugar. His answer is, that the objection is rather a smart than a sound one, and that the inapplicability of the position will be obvious on a few moments' consideration.—

"In one word (says Mr. Greg) this country is not called on to exclude foreign slave-grown cotton, because it never has been excluded. It is called on to exclude slave-grown sugar, because it has never been admitted."

The conclusion of the pamphlet is as follows:—

"That the only method of destroying the slave-trade, and putting an end to slavery, is by destroying the demand for slave-grown produce, and thus doing away with the demand for slaves; that this can only be accomplished by establishing to the world, and through the medium of the West Indies, the superior cheapness and productiveness of free-labour; that the prosperity of the West Indies can only be continued and ensured by an extensive and systematic system of immigration, and by the temporary continuation of the present protective discriminating duties on sugar."

Sir, in case hon. Gentlemen opposite should not perfectly understand the last passage, I will repeat it for their benefit. "The prosperity of the West Indies cannot be ensured without the temporary continuation of the present protective discriminating duties on sugar." This, Sir, is not the first time, that I have been indebted for an argument to the Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

"Sol occubuit, nox nulla secuta est."

I have kept my promise, I have read the pamphlet, and it has confirmed me in my opinion, that we ought not to admit to the British market foreign sugar the produce of slave-labour. Sir, I am not unaware, that owing to the effects of the emancipation of the West-Indian slaves, there has been a great diminution in the productiveness of these colonies; and if we had no other source to which we could look for a supply of sugar, the pressure would be so severe that we could not continue to the West Indies their present monopoly. Whatever might be the advantages of encouraging the cultivation of sugar in the West-India colonies, still, if we could only look to a supply of sugar to the amount of 115,000 tons yearly, we could not continue the prohibition on foreign sugar. But, Sir, I look to the east. I look to India to afford a security and check against extra-

vagant prices; and I am of opinion, that if you permit the experiment which we have entered on to be carried out, the West Indies, the Mauritius, and India, will together amply supply us with sugar at a fair and moderate rate. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, referred with apparent satisfaction to the increase that had taken place in the price of sugar on the day on which he spoke. But, Sir, I believe the right hon. Gentleman will find, that for some weeks past there has been a progressive reduction in the price; and, notwithstanding the prevalent expectation that this House would refuse to confirm the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, this expectation has not produced any increase in the price of sugar. The Member for Liskeard says, we are about to inflict an enormous injury on the East Indies, by opening the British market to East-India sugar, refusing, at the same time competition with foreign sugar; that we are fostering a new monopoly, and presenting to it a single market which will soon be overstocked. But surely the markets of the world will continue open to East-India sugar. Why should not East-India sugar, if the supply for our use be superabundant, compete in the markets of Europe with foreign sugar? But, says the hon. Gentleman, "Do not divert from their present employment, the labour and capital of India." Divert the labour and capital of India! Have you considered the position in which India stands with respect to this country? Remittances are required from India on behalf of Government, to the amount of 3,200,000*l.* yearly; private remittances amount to about half a million more; and there is no other mode of paying these remittances, except by the agricultural produce of India. If, then, I encourage the produce of that country, and thus enable it to make up the amount of the remittances—if I do this, shall I be told, that I am inflicting an injury either on this country or on India? Shall I be told, that when I am dealing with a country from which we exact a sum of 3,200,000*l.* for Government purposes only, and which has no other mode of making up that sum, except from the produce of her agricultural industry, I must apply strictly and rigorously the principles of free-trade? Sir, I have often listened in this House, with painful emotions, to debates respecting the condition of India, and to the evidence of the injury which this country has done

her by destroying her manufactures through the substitution of our own. Can I forget the accounts of Dacca, once a great and flourishing city, the seat of prosperous manufactures, containing a population of 150,000 inhabitants, now reduced to 20,000 or 30,000, with the malaria and famine extending their ravages, and threatening to turn it into a desert? I recollect, in a debate respecting the emigration of the Hill Coolies, being struck by the speech of the hon. Member for Roxburgh, a gentleman well qualified from knowledge and experience, to deal with the subject. He spoke of the danger and mischief that would ensue if you refused an outlet for the agricultural labour of India. He gave an account of the wages of agricultural labourers in Bengal, and of the condition of the inhabitants. The wages of the labourer are about 6s. a month—that is, 1s. 6d. a week, or about 2½d. per day. They subsist he says, upon rice; and if rice fails, they starve. He described the manner in which he had seen the unfortunate people hurrying by thousands to receive the relief given by the Government of Bengal. “I have seen,” said he, “whole villages swept away by dreadful inundations, and vast tracts of land utterly ruined for cultivation.” The hon. Gentleman then drew a picture of horror more dreadful than the most romantic imagination could have conceived. I know nothing more appalling than the simple truth related by the hon. Gentleman. “I know this,” said he, “that an officer charged with a mission from Calcutta was obliged to turn back in consequence of the horrible smell arising from the unburied carcases of those unfortunate beings who had died from famine, and whose bodies literally strewed the roads.” And are we, with such accounts as these, to be fearful of disturbing the application of agricultural labour in India? Have the people of that country, ruined by our manufactures, and subject to heavy fiscal demands, to be met only by the produce of agricultural labour—have they no paramount claim upon us? The rigid principles of free-trade may make no distinction between their produce and that of the slaveholder of Cuba; but surely there are obligations—moral and social obligations—duties you owe to millions submitted to your sway—which compel you to have some regard for other considerations than cheap sugar. These are the main grounds on which I support the resolution of my noble Friend (Lord Sandon); first,

I am desirous of giving fair scope for the experiment we have made by the abolition of negro slavery, and of encouraging the production of sugar by free labour in the West Indies. Secondly, admitting the deficiency of our present supply from the West Indies, I will give a decided preference to the East Indies in procuring an additional supply. Thirdly, I will not, without more cogent evidence of the necessity, incur the risk of encouraging slavery and the slave-trade by opening, for the first time, the market of England to the sugar of Cuba and Brazil. Sir, I never at any time sought to inflame the minds of the people on the question of slavery. I gave my support to the measure of my noble Friend (Lord Stanley) for the abolition of slavery; and I gave every credit to those who took part in the introduction of that measure. Sir, I never lent myself to the cry of Anti-slavery, and I will not now lend myself to the cry of cheap sugar. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, reproached my right hon. Friend, the Member for Cambridge, and myself, with inconsistency in having formerly been parties to a proposition of Mr. Charles Grant, for the introduction of foreign slave-grown sugar. The right hon. Gentleman said, the proposition had been supported by the Cabinet, of which my noble Friend and myself were Members; that the great principle of Mr. Grant's measure was the admission of slave-sugar into competition with that of the East Indies, and that the protection proposed for the latter was only 3s. per cwt. The right hon. Gentlemen said to us, “Are you now prepared to ride into office upon such grossly inconsistent grounds as the rejection of a proposition similar to that which you yourselves supported?” Sir, neither I, nor any Member of that Cabinet, have any recollection of such a discussion as that which the right hon. Gentleman has mentioned. If my noble Friend Lord Glenelg, had any recollection of it, I should have given up my own impressions; but I believe his impression is the same as mine—that no such proposition was ever submitted to that Cabinet. It may have been suggested by him to individual Members of that Cabinet, but the Cabinet never went into the formal consideration of any such proposition. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says, we did not then dissent from the principle of Mr. Grant's measure. Very true—but the principle in question was not the competition of slave-sugar with East-India sugar

—the principle was, the increase of consumption of sugar by lowering the duty. We said, we agreed to that principle, but feared risking the loss of revenue. But it must be recollected that since the period in question slavery in our own colonies has been abolished, and that completely alters the view in which this subject is to be regarded. There was besides at that time a bounty on the export of our own sugar, and the protection proposed by Mr. Grant, at least as far as the West Indies were concerned, was complete. Foreign sugar could not have entered into competition with colonial sugar at the rates of duty he proposed. I am surprised, I confess, at the altered tone which Gentlemen have lately assumed respecting slavery. After all our magnificent professions, is this the course which is proposed, and are these the arguments by which that course is recommended? We are now to tell foreign countries that the only effectual way to abolish slavery and the slave-trade, is to admit slave-grown sugar to free competition with our own. True, we may give a temporary stimulus to the produce of slavery, but then we shall improve the manufacture of free-labour sugar, by rivalry with that of sugar the produce of slave-labour. But will not the improvement be reciprocal? If the result of competition will be to economize the application of capital on our part—to introduce improved machinery—to stimulate skill and invention, as applied to free-labour sugar—will not the influence of that same competition produce similar results in Cuba and Brazil? But who will believe your professions? Who will believe that your motive in opening, for the first time, the market of England to slave-sugar is the benevolent wish to extinguish slavery? No, tell the truth. If you want cheap sugar, say so. If the high price of sugar diminishes the comfort of your own population—if you want to open the markets of Brazil and Cuba to your manufactures by taking their sugar in exchange—avow your object, and foreign countries will understand you. But they will only laugh at your pretence that you are labouring to extinguish slavery by increasing the consumption of slave-grown produce. I have heard, with surprise, from Cabinet Ministers, in the course of this debate, the doctrine that the delinquencies of foreign countries are no business of ours; that we never contemplated removing slavery in other countries by our example; that it is enough for us to have removed

the taint from ourselves; that the conduct of other countries with respect to slavery is a matter of indifference to us. The Member for Wolverhampton, says the United States would have as good a right to refuse commercial intercourse with us on account of the Corn-laws, as we have to do so with other countries on account of slavery; in short, that the question is a matter of indifference to us. Why surely the hon. Gentleman said, the municipal laws and usages of other countries were no business of ours, and applied his remark to the continuance of slavery and the slave-trade by countries with which we had commercial intercourse. The intense feeling that once animated the people of England with regard to the abominations of slavery may have abated, but I am mistaken if there will not be great regret, great indignation at our altered views and altered tone with respect to slavery, and to the moral obligations which we are under to discourage, by every effort we can make, the slave-trade and slavery in other countries of the world. We are now, it seems, to abandon the high position we have hitherto taken, and to deny our own right to speak to other nations in the language of commanding authority on the subject of slavery. The noble Lord alluded to the difference between England and Rome, and quoted the beautiful lines of Dryden for the purpose of heightening the contrast:—

“Rome, it is thine alone with awful sway  
To rule the world, and make mankind obey,  
Disposing peace and war, thy own majestic way.”

True it is that we have no such power as that which the poet ascribes to Rome. We have formidable competitors in the struggle for empire; we cannot compel obedience to our commands by the exercise of material power: but I had hoped until I heard this debate that there was a sway, an “awful sway,” which we could still exercise—that there was in our hands not a material but a moral power, enabling us to “rule the world,” and, through the influence of high principles and of glorious sacrifices, to “make mankind obey.” Peace and war we cannot dispose according to our arbitrary will, but I thought we still hoped to dispose other nations to follow the “majestic way” which has conducted us to humanity and justice. If we still cherish these hopes, if we have not abandoned these high pretensions, then the noble Lord may still claim for England some of the

high privileges asserted for Rome, and, continuing his quotation, may confidently say—

“To tame the proud—the fetter’d slave to free,—

These are imperial arts, and worthy thee.”

Sir, these are the grounds on which I give my vote for the resolution of my noble Friend. And in voting for that resolution I am taunted by the noble Lord with factious purposes. The noble Lord commenced his speech, Sir, by repelling with indignation the accusations against her Majesty’s Ministers, and said with much earnestness that he was conscious no man who had watched the progress of the Government of which he was a member could ever suppose them capable of bringing forward any public measure with a view to court popularity. Now, Sir, I say nothing on the subject of the noble Lord’s defence of himself—but I had hoped that the experience of the noble Lord would have sufficed to free us from the charge of having offered a factious opposition to her Majesty’s Government. Before he levelled any such accusation against us, he might have recalled to his recollection several occasions when, if we had offered a factious opposition to him, his position as a Minister of the Crown in this House would have been far less easy than it has been. He might have borne in mind the question of privilege—the question of the union of the Canadas—the question of the Poor Law—and, Sir, the noble Lord might have had, on a review of these measures, the justice to give us some credit for not having been desirous against our convictions to embarrass his Government on great public questions. But the course I pursue is a factious course!—I, who take the same course now that I took last year—I, who, when the Member for Wigan proposed to introduce into this market foreign sugar the produce of slave-labour, in competition with colonial sugar the produce of free labour—voted against the hon. Member’s proposition on precisely the same grounds on which I vote against that of the Government this year—I, forsooth, am to be charged with faction, not because I alter, but because I adhere to, my opinions! Why the only *prima facie* evidence of faction in this case is, that her Majesty’s Government pursued the same course. I have had some experience of Parliamentary assurance, but it is an unexampled specimen of it, when Gentlemen who abandon their opinions this year charge those who adhere

to those same opinions, both parties having held them together in concert last year, with faction. There is another objection to our resolution. “Oh,” say hon. Gentlemen opposite, “you embody no great irrevocable principle in your resolution.” They point, no doubt, to the illustrious example of the noble Lord’s resolution of 1835, on the appropriation of Church Revenue in Ireland. “Why content yourselves,” they say, “with temporary grounds of objection to our present measures? why not declare that no settlement ever can be satisfactory which does not exclude now and for ever foreign sugar?” No, no, we have had memorable examples of irrevocable resolutions—we have them fresh in our memory—we find them recorded in the Journals—the standing opprobrium of your Government. “But see what an enormity you commit”—say hon. Gentlemen opposite. “You absolutely leave a loophole to escape by. Who can predict but that next year you will be compelled to adopt this very proposition which you now reject?” Why, even if we should do so, should we be worse off than the Gentlemen opposite? They opposed last year the very motion they make this, and thus left for themselves the loophole by which they are now escaping. But do not mistake me. Do not believe that I vote for the resolution of my noble Friend with the intention of deviating from my present course in a future year. I will be frank and explicit with you. My deliberate opinion is, that the great experiment which has cost this country so much—the great experiment for the extinction of slavery—should be fairly and perfectly tried; and that to this effect we ought to encourage sugar, the production of free labour, by giving it the preference in the market of the United Kingdom. If our West-India Colonies and our possessions in the East can supply the consumption of this country, can ensure us a supply of sugar at reasonable prices, at such prices as shall permit the accustomed use of sugar—I would continue to them, on the special and peculiar grounds which I have referred to, the preference in the home market. The price of sugar is falling; it was 56s. 10d. in July, 1840—it is now only 37s. 7d.; and you have recently given, by equalising the duties on East-India and West-India rum, increased encouragement for the production of sugar in India. I confidently hope, therefore, that we may look for an adequate supply of sugar the produce of free labour. I should be perfectly content



to have terminated my observations with what I have stated, but that I am reminded by the speeches of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite that this question is a great financial and commercial question, as well as a question of sugar—that it is connected with others of equally grave and serious import to the State—that her Majesty's Government court investigation into their whole plan of finance, and that it is expected that hon. Members should not confine themselves to one particular topic in discussing it, but embrace all its bearings. With this I do not agree. I contend that the policy of admitting foreign sugar must be determined by other considerations than those of ordinary commercial policy—that it stands on special and peculiar grounds—and that I might fully admit the principles of free trade—and yet exempt from the application of them this particular question. Sir, I do not deny that in this country there exists great manufacturing distress;—and I am sure that, whatever may be the issue of our party contests in this House, we all bear with pain those details of individual suffering that have been read in the course of the debate. But, Sir, I protest against these details as legitimate arguments to influence our judgment on the question before us. No man can hear them with more pain and sympathy than I do—no man can more cordially or more anxiously desire to relieve them; but, at the same time that I admit this, I am bound also to remind you that, at all times and under all circumstances, similar distress has existed; and so long as we live in our present complicated state of society, I see no reason to suppose that such will not exist, and that appeals, founded on it, will not be preferred, and attempts made to influence by these means our reason and judgment. But, Sir, although I freely admit the existence of such distress, I do not, I confess, view with the same alarm as hon. Members opposite have professed to view it the commercial and manufacturing condition of the country. I have referred with some anxiety to the accounts that have been laid before the House as to the commerce and manufactures of this country; and I see nothing in them to justify the belief that the depression in these branches of our national industry is more than temporary, and that we may not expect a speedy revival, from the elasticity of our resources. I shall take first the most unfavourable document that I can find. The House is aware, that there are comparative estimates

of the exports and imports of the United Kingdom for three years, beginning with 1838, and ending with 1840. The official value of our exports was, in 1838, 92,000,000*l.*; 1839, 97,000,000*l.*; 1840, 102,000,000*l.* But official value, it may be stated, is only a criterion of quantity, and the declared value is a better test of the profitable nature of our trade. The declared value then of exports was, in 1838, 49,630,000*l.*; 1839, 52,700,000*l.*; 1840, 51,000,000*l.*, showing a decrease of 1,700,000*l.* on a comparison of the last year with the preceding. In the cotton manufactures, however, there is no decrease, nor in the linen manufacture. The decrease has been on the earthenware manufactures, hardware, the woollen manufactures, and the silk manufactures. These have been the chief articles on which there has been a defalcation. The total defalcation is 1,700,000*l.*, comparing the declared value of 1839 with that of 1840; and the defalcation in earthenware, hardware, and in our silk and woollen manufactures, will account for 1,600,000*l.* of the whole. Now, I find that for these four articles the United States are our chief customers. The United States take two-fifths of our earthenware, two-fifths of our hardware, one-half of our silk manufactures, and one-third of our woollen manufactures; and, when I consider the unsettled state of the United States in respect to credit and currency, I see ample cause why there should be a temporary decrease of demand for articles of British manufacture, and grounds for the confident hope, that, when the difficulties of the United States have passed away, the demand will again revive. We must not be too desponding on this subject, when we consider the great variation in demand, which has frequently taken place in the American market. It is quite singular to observe the vicissitudes of our commercial intercourse with the United States. I have been furnished with a return of the value in dollars of exports from Great Britain into the United States for some years past. In 1834 it was 47,000,000; in 1835, 61,000,000; in 1836, 78,000,000; and then it suddenly declined to 44,000,000. The year after it was again so low as 44,000,000; in 1839 it was 65,000,000; and, as might be expected after so sudden an increase, the next year was one of depression and deficiency. Thus the experience of our trade with the United States warrants us in entertaining the hope that the demand in the United States will

revive, and that the depression in those particular manufactures which have fallen off within the last year will ere long cease. Let us now take the state of our navigation during the last three years. I cannot reconcile that state with any serious and general diminution of our manufacturing and commercial prosperity. In 1838 the tonnage of vessels built and registered in the ports of the United Kingdom; these are newly-built vessels, was 157,000; in 1839 it was 290,000; in 1833 it was 333,000. In 1838 the total shipping; I take the tonnage and not the vessels, because the number of vessels might be increased and yet the tonnage remain the same, or decline in quantity; the tonnage of shipping entered inwards in 1838 was 4,000,000; in 1839, 4,433,000; in 1840, 4,657,000. The tonnage of shipping cleared outwards was, in 1838, 4,099,000; in 1839, 4,494,000; in 1840, 4,783,000. The tonnage of vessels built and registered in the ports of England was, in 1838, 127,000; in 1839, 144,000; in 1840, 165,000. Now, fully admitting, that there is severe pressure of manufacturing distress in some parts of the country, I can hardly reconcile the existence of the very serious extent of commercial distress, which some persons suppose to exist, with that increase of the trade and navigation of the country which is indicated by the increase of the tonnage. Looking, then, at the state of the United States; looking at the state of our relations with China, and the interruption of our intercourse with that country; looking, too, at the condition of Syria; looking at the position of France, and other countries of Europe, influenced by the fear of war, affecting in a certain degree the course of peaceful commerce; if under such a combination of circumstances there should have been a diminution in the declared value of British exports during the last year, I am not led to infer from that diminution that all hopes of the manufacturing prosperity and superiority of this country are extinct. At the same time, Sir, I am quite prepared to admit, that, even if the state of affairs was most prosperous, that is no reason why relaxations should not be made in restrictions upon commerce. Do not let us remain stationary. If we can improve the commercial position of this country, do not let us be content with maintaining our present ground, but apply ourselves to a fair consideration of the means by which that increased prosperity may be obtained. The hon. Mem-

ber for Wolverhampton insists upon it that I must make a declaration of my sentiments with respect to the principles of free trade. The hon. Gentleman says, that his principles and the principles of his Friends who concur with him are, that, without reference to any other consideration whatever, your true policy is to buy in the cheapest market. Now, if these are the principles of the hon. Gentleman, and to be uniformly and invariably applied without reference to the circumstances under which, and the time at which, they are to be applied, I can only say, that in those principles, or rather in the application of those principles, I do not concur. I do not contest them with reference to countries in which, if it were possible to conceive such a case, there are no preformed relations of society; but as my noble Friend justly said, in that admirable speech which he has delivered in the course of this debate—in a country of such complicated relations, of such extensive empire, in a country where there exist moral and social obligations wholly independent of mere commercial considerations, I say invariably and uniformly to apply the principle of buying in the cheapest market would be, in my opinion, to involve this country in extreme embarrassment. I apprehend, that her Majesty's Government will be obliged to dissent from the principles of free trade as laid down by the hon. Gentleman. If the principle of the hon. Gentleman is really to buy in the cheapest market without reference to any other consideration, what does he say to the proposal of her Majesty's Government to impose a duty of 8s. per quarter on the importation of corn? Why does he not demand from them the free and unrestricted importation of wheat, sugar, timber, and everything else? But, in fact, her Majesty's Government claim exactly the same privilege that I claim, *viz.*, that I will not commit myself to your mere abstract principles without knowing the circumstances under which, and the time at which, you propose to apply them. If by the principles of free trade you simply mean the progressive and well-considered relaxation of restrictions upon commerce, I may venture to refer to the past. I can say with truth, notwithstanding the observations of the noble Lord, that there was no man in this House from whom Mr. Huskisson derived a more cordial and invariable support than he derived from me. I know not whether the principles on which he acted are unpopular

now or no, but I do not hesitate to declare that I did at that time cordially support the proposals made by Mr. Huskisson, and that the result of those measures has confirmed me in the wisdom of that course. The noble Lord, however, seemed to consider that Mr. Huskisson met with a cold and hesitating support from his colleagues and from the party who generally acted in concurrence with them; but this I know, and I may appeal to the noble Lord (Lord Palmerston) to confirm my statement, that Mr. Huskisson assigned, as one of his chief reasons for joining the Duke of Wellington in 1828, that he would have in me a colleague from whom he had previously received constant and cordial support in his commercial measures. Now, a word as to the unvarying assistance which Mr. Huskisson received from the noble Lord's party. The fact is, that the most formidable opposition which Mr. Huskisson had to encounter came from the hon. Member for Coventry; and on that very question which has been so particularly referred to, the silk manufacture—on that particular question the Member for Coventry (Mr. Ellice), boasting, of course, of the most enlarged views of commercial policy, yet, being pressed by his Coventry constituents—collected together every argument which he could possibly collect, with the assistance of the silk manufacturers of Coventry, to show why silk manufactures should be exempted from the principles of free trade; and the only opposition in point of an actual motion which my right hon. Friend encountered, was the motion made by the hon. Gentleman, the *grande decus columenque rerum* of her Majesty's Government. And the hon. Gentleman was seconded and cordially supported by a learned Gentleman (Mr. Williams), a faithful adherent of the same party, who was then Member for Lincoln, and has since been elevated to the office of judge. That hon. Gentleman (a sound Whig I presume) not only contested the principles of free trade, but he accused Mr. Huskisson and us who acted with him of being "cold-blooded metaphysicians, who," according to the language of Mr. Burke, "were actuated by all the malignity of the devil—and by the same sovereign contempt for the happiness and welfare of mankind." And now, forsooth, we are to be told that Mr. Huskisson met with nothing but obstruction from his own party, and that he was wafted over all his difficulties on the flowing wave of Whig enthusiasm. The noble Lord seems to

claim an exclusive inheritance of the principles of Mr. Huskisson. Nay, he makes the awful announcement, that if he and his colleagues are driven out of office, they will pack up the principles of free trade and carry them off with them. "Don't rob us of our property," says the noble Lord; but at last the generosity of his nature prevails, and he promises that, if he is properly applied to by his successors, he will not withhold a contribution from the stock of liberal policy. Why, what right has the noble Lord to claim this exclusive dominion over the principles of Mr. Huskisson? When did we hear a word of them until the pressure of the present moment? Was there ever any public man who pronounced so positive a condemnation of the principles of free trade as the present Prime Minister of this country? And did one of you dissent from that declaration? When Lord Melbourne said, that it would be absolute insanity to deprive the agriculture of this country of protection—and when he held language from which it must be reasonably inferred that he thought it impossible, in the complicated relations of society in this country, to apply the pure principles of free trade to the trade in corn or almost anything else—when he gave that plain indication of his sentiments, as the head of the Government, did one man of you rise in this House to express his opposition to those sentiments? Was the budget of last year brought forward on the principles which are now advocated? Was the five per cent. additional on customs and excise a specimen of your comprehensive financial views? When the President of the Board of Trade, in the simplicity of his heart, said there could be no great harm in putting five per cent. additional on tobacco since the present amount of duty was 1,200 per cent. on the prime cost of the article—had he then become a convert to the principles of Mr. Huskisson? Let us do justice to Mr. Huskisson, and not confound his measures and proceedings with yours. Mr. Huskisson applied his principles soberly and cautiously, and with the power and means and intention of effectually carrying them out. He prepared the public mind for the adoption of these principles; he anticipated opposition to them, and prevented the success of that opposition by the cautious and deliberate manner in which he approached them. You ask me what I propose to do with reference to the Corn-laws. Sir, I will not shrink from the expression of my opinion. If I saw a reason

for changing my course, I would do so, and frankly avow it. But I have not changed my opinion. Notwithstanding the combination which has been formed against the Corn-laws, notwithstanding the declaration that either the total repeal, or the substitution of a fixed duty for the present scale, is the inevitable result of the agitation now going forward—notwithstanding this declaration, I do not hesitate to avow my adherence to the opinion which I expressed last year, and again to declare that my preference is decidedly in favour of a graduated to a fixed duty. I said, last year, and I repeat now—for I may refer to the speech I then made as the expressions of my opinions now, that I viewed with anxiety the state of the manufactures of this country. I stated then, as I state now, that I consider the prosperous state of the manufacturing industry of this country to be intimately connected with the welfare of our agriculture, and that the prosperity of our manufactures is a greater support to our agriculture than any system of Corn-laws. That was the language I held then, and that is the language I now repeat. I said that I preferred the principle of a sliding duty to a fixed one. I said that I would not bind myself to the details of the existing law, but would reserve to myself the unfettered discretion of considering and amending those details. You declare, however, that no man can maintain the present system of Corn-laws, and be friendly to a liberal commercial policy. I deny that conclusion, and I refer you to Mr. Huskisson. He certainly never considered protection to agriculture incompatible with the removal of restrictions on commerce. An hon. Gentleman has quoted some opinions said to be delivered by Mr. Huskisson after he left office, but I know that, during the period I was united in office with him, there was no more strenuous supporter of a graduated scale, and no more determined opposer of a fixed duty. And to put that question beyond all doubt, and to set at rest any suspicion of my stating opinions as his which he had not entertained, I will quote them to the House. Mr. Huskisson stated in 1827, that it had been urged against him that he held the opinion that England ought not to depend largely on other countries for the supply of corn, and that he had declared in 1815, and still maintained, that nothing could be more dangerous than a reliance of this country on foreign countries for her food. He

avowed that such were his opinions, and with regard to the graduated scale, he observed, that he was not only the advocate of it, but that he claimed credit for being its actual author. In 1827, Mr. Huskisson said :—

“ I proposed, in 1814, a graduated scale, and it is not likely I should now recommend a principle utterly inconsistent with it.”

In 1828 Mr. Huskisson spoke thus :—

“ An hon. Gentleman had spoken in favour of a fixed duty ; abstractedly, that might look well enough ; but, when they regarded the circumstances of the country and the wants of the people, they would see the impossibility of adopting such a principle. If a high permanent duty were imposed, then, in periods of scarcity, the poor would be exposed to sufferings, the infliction of which no claims for protection on the part of the home corn-grower would ever justify”. “ A permanent fixed duty was out of the question.”

This was the opinion of Mr. Huskisson in 1828, two years before the termination of his useful career. The noble Lord will, however, propose the adoption of a fixed duty. I shall offer my opposition to it on the ground that I do not think a fixed duty can be permanently maintained. The Member for Marylebone agrees with me for he supports the proposition, not on its own merits, but because it will be a stepping-stone to absolute freedom in the trade of corn. The noble Lord's fixed duty will be assailed by the same arguments by which the graduated scale is now attacked. The Members for Finsbury or Wolverhampton will again detail cases of severe privation in the manufacturing towns—the cry of “ no bread-tax ” will be raised—the noble Lord will infallibly be met by that illegitimate warfare of which he has set the example—and what is his confidence that he will be enabled to maintain his fixed duty ? You ask again—what do you propose to do with respect to the timber-duties ? I answer, I reserve to myself an unfettered action on this point. Before I consider the timber-duties I shall require that the noble Lord will give me the benefit of that information which he has derived from the Governor-general of Canada. How is it possible for me—how could any rational man venture to form an opinion upon such a subject as the timber-duties, without having been put in possession, not only of the financial and commercial, but of the political circumstances connected with them ? Did the noble Lord apply without hesitation, the principles of free

trade to the timber-duties? No; the noble Lord availed himself of the advantages which his office gave him. He knew that there was a great political crisis in our North American colonies. He looked to the state of Canada. He considered the great experiment which had been made there by the union of the provinces. He reflected upon the state of our relations with the United States of America, consequent on the apprehension of Mr. M'Leod, and the long-pending and unsettled question of the north-eastern boundary. He took all these important circumstances into consideration, and wisely said,—

“ Before I disturb the trading interests of Canada by great alterations in the existing timber-duties, I will ascertain the state of feeling in that country on political questions, and confer with the Governor-general as to the political effects of a commercial measure.”

And what answer does he receive from the Governor-general? An avowal that the alteration of the timber-duties, under present circumstances, would greatly add to his difficulties in conducting the Government of Canada. And is there any justice in your demanding from me positive declarations of my opinion on the subject of these duties, and denying me at the same time the opportunity of weighing the political considerations that are involved in them? The only information you give me is, that the measure of the noble Lord will increase the difficulties of governing Canada, and yet I am to declare preremptorily in its favour. But it seems that the Governor-general of Canada has informed the noble Lord, that if some other measures were proposed concurrently with an alteration of the timber-duties, the dissatisfaction in Canada might be materially abated. The noble Lord has not given us the faintest conception of the nature of that other measure. How preposterous it would be to enter into the question of the timber-duties with nothing but partial information, and mysterious notices as to the possible effect which the agitation of that question might produce in a colony which is in the crisis of a hazardous experiment in Government, and which is on the frontier of a powerful State with which our relations are far from satisfactory. Still, however, there remains the argument, that we are in a state of extreme financial difficulty, and some extraordinary effort must be made to relieve us. There is great financial difficulty; but, for that

financial difficulty you—her Majesty's Government—are mainly responsible. You have had the possession of power since the year 1835. You have had the complete uncontrolled administration of the finances of this country during that period. Whenever you happen to be successful you boast of success as a proof of your wisdom, but you never admit failure to be even *prima facie* evidence of your incapacity. But the whole course of your financial administration has been a series of failures. Year after year there has been deficiency, year after year increasing expenditure, and diminished means of meeting it. And now, when the aggregate of your yearly deficiencies amounts to near 8,000,000*l.*—when the burden becomes intolerable—when exposure and disgrace are inevitable—instead of penitent confessions of your own incapacity and mal-administration, you represent yourselves as martyrs in the cause of free trade—and call upon me to furnish you with a budget. And I am by no means surprised at your confidence. You recollect that when I left office in 1830, had I been connected with an administration which, during the period in which it had the management of the finances of this country, reduced the public debt by 20,000,000*l.* of capital, and the annual charge upon that debt by more than 1,000,000*l.* You remember, too, that we left a surplus of 1,600,000*l.* of revenue over expenditure—and mark! we did all this with the incumbrance of an unreformed Parliament. You have had your own way for five years, with the advantage of a reformed Parliament; you have had the full enjoyment of the promised blessings of “cheap government.” You got rid of these your illiberal colleagues in 1834—[pointing to Lord Stanley and Sir James Graham]—and with all these advantages in your favour, a reformed Parliament, cheap Government, no patronage, no obstruction from illiberal colleagues, the shameful result is a deficit for the present year of 2,400,000*l.*, a total deficit of 7,500,000*l.* And you consider me responsible for this, and demand from me a Budget. You recollect, no doubt, the aid which I gave you with respect to the Jamaica question on a former occasion—when I rescued you from the perils of your own evil ways, when I enabled you to retain popular representative Government—when I prevented you from disturbing the foundation of the security of every other colony which boasted of a representative system—

when you were compelled to take my advice, and were glad and rejoiced in your counsellor—you remember all this, and, with good reason, invoke my aid again—and be assured that, if the circumstances were the same, I would again give it you, and again compel you to take my advice. But I cannot help you now. No, great as is my commiseration, I cannot assist you. I view with unaffected sympathy the position of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It has been remarked, that a good man struggling with adversity, is a sight worthy of the gods. And certainly, the right hon. Gentleman, both with respect to the goodness of the man, and the extent of his adversity, presents at the present moment that spectacle. Can there be a more lamentable picture than that of a Chancellor of the Exchequer seated on an empty chest—by the pool of bottomless deficiency—fishing for a Budget? I won't bite, the right hon. Gentleman shall return home with his pannier as empty as his chest. What absurdity there is in demanding a Budget from me—in requiring that I, who am out of office, who have been out of office for ten years, shall agitate the public mind by declaring what taxes I would impose, or what taxes I would remit, if I were in power! There may be some young Member silly enough to suppose, that I will permit declarations on such a subject to be extorted from me—that I will give you the advantage of hinting at a property-tax, or threatening to increase the penny post. I will make no declaration whatever as to the course which I will pursue, if in office, with regard to financial measures. Nay, more, my first act in office must necessarily be to demand a vote of confidence from the House of Commons, in order that I may be enabled to review the financial situation of the country—to consider its expenditure, and the various causes from which the present difficulties have arisen. I would not receive office on the condition of making hasty, ill-considered attempts to repair the existing evils. I admit now, as I have often admitted, the bad policy of incurring debt during peace; but that admission should not prevent me from proposing such temporary arrangements as might give time for mature consideration on the present financial condition and prospects of the country. The decision of to-night will involve a vote of confidence. If unfavourable to the Government, it will imply distrust in their competency to relieve the country from its

present embarrassment. They are chargeable with having produced it: it is in vain for them to refer to occasional causes of extraordinary expenditure—to a rebellion in Canada—to an expedition against China. After making allowance for these, there is the evidence of gross mismanagement—there is proof that, while there was a growing increase in expenditure, not only there was no effort made to provide fresh means of meeting it, but existing means were thrown away. Revenue was abandoned while estimates were increasing—revenue was abandoned not from the conviction of the Government that the sacrifice was wise,—but abandoned for the purpose of conciliating party support. What has been the cause of this? What has led us step by step to the brink of this precipice? Not the want of ability in individual Members of the Cabinet—not negligence, not incompetence—no, the evil is to be found in a departure from constitutional principles—in the persevering attempt to govern without having the confidence of the House of Commons. There may be dexterity in this, but it is fraught with intolerable evil to the country. I speak not of occasional defeats, but of the exhibition year after year of the inability of a Government to carry its own measures. You yourselves must be conscious of this. You have written your own condemnation. When I retired from office in 1835, after a short and ineffectual struggle of three months—when I relinquished office on the express ground, that I did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons—the noble Lord told me, that I had acted in the spirit of the constitution. When Lord Melbourne returned to office in 1839, after the defeat of Government on the Jamaica Bill, Lord Melbourne—after referring to a conversation between King William 3rd and Bishop Burnet, in which the King observed, that the worst form of Government was a weak and inefficient monarchy—said, that the worst administration that could be formed was that which did not possess sufficient of the confidence of Parliament to be enabled to carry the measures which it deemed important for the public welfare. It is a violation of constitutional principle—a violation of the spirit of representative Government—that this state of things should continue. It is not fit that we should present to Europe the spectacle of a House of Commons constantly refusing to sanction the measures of an Administration, yet not influencing the fate of that Administration.

It is not for the interest of free and popular Government, that this exhibition should continue. It is not for the interest of monarchy, that the servants of the Crown should be powerless in the House of Commons. It is not for the interest of the measures which they recommend, that those measures should be viewed with suspicion and distrust on account of the position of their authors. It is not for the interest of public men—it detracts from their weight and authority—it is injurious to their public character—to retain office without power. Power, indeed, in one sense, they do possess. I do not underrate it. They can excite and inflame the people; they can, by the minute detail of sufferings—by imputing those sufferings to the acts of the Legislature—by comparing, for instance, the wretched condition of a manufacturing population with the ease and comfort of liberated negroes, they can obstruct the calm and dispassionate consideration of public measures. But this is a sorry triumph: this appeal to passion can always be made—it always has been made: distress—severe distress—privations that are afflicting in the recital—will always exist in such a society as that in which we live, and can always be urged against any measure which partakes (as the best measures may partake) of an unpopular character. These appeals have a powerful effect, when made by individual Members of the Legislature. When made by men in authority—by men whose duty it is to resist the influence of such appeals, and to expose their tendencies—they act with tenfold weight. It may be, that you will succeed in your present object; it may be, that amid the conflicts of passion which you will have excited, amid the collision of contending interests, you may gather up the scattered elements of discord, and combine them into the materials of party strength; but you will find them dangerous and uncontrollable instruments of Government. Rely upon it, that when authority supports itself by invoking the assistance of agitation, it calls to its aid an ally, powerful no doubt, but an ally that will be its master, and not its slave.

Viscount Palmerston spoke as follows:\*

The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Kent, in the speech which he addressed to the House this evening, expressed his regret at the long duration of this debate; that regret did not surprise me, because a debate less favourable to one side of the

House, and attended in point of argument, whatever may be its result as to numbers, with greater triumph to the other side, it never has been my lot to witness; I can well understand therefore that the Member for Kent should regret the protracted length of the debate; and notwithstanding the speech of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who has just sat down, and though I admit the great dexterity with which he has handled the various topics which he has treated, I do not think that even that speech will induce the right hon. Member for Kent to retract the regret which he has expressed. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who has just sat down has been pleased to make himself exceedingly merry at what he conceives to be the forlorn condition of my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer fishing for a budget. My right hon. Friend is fishing for no budget, he has caught his budget, and has laid it on the table. My right hon. Friend does not go begging to the other side for a budget. He has been reproached on former occasions, and has been taunted to night, for playing a part which is stated to be utterly unworthy of a Chancellor of the Exchequer. He has to deal with a deficiency in the revenue and has brought forward a budget to supply that deficiency, and he is charged with an entire forgetfulness of the duties incumbent on a Chancellor of the Exchequer, because instead of coming down with a proposal to add to the burthens of the people, he proposes to fill up the deficiency of revenue by relieving the people from a portion of those burthens. The right hon. Baronet is mistaken in saying that we asked him for his budget instead of ours. What we asked was, and not even to night has an answer been given to our question, tell us aye or no what you mean; we intend to supply the deficiency of the revenue by striking a blow at some of the great monopolies which have hitherto retarded the prosperity of the country, you object to our proposal upon narrow and insufficient grounds; tell us then plainly whether you are willing to make up the deficiency in the way we have intended to do so; or whether you are prepared to vote new taxes for the purpose. That is the question put to the other side, and to that question we have had no answer. The right hon. Baronet, indeed stated that he would give us with the utmost frank-

\* From a corrected report.

ness his opinion on the three questions, about sugar, corn, and timber: but what were his declarations, what were those explanations which were to be given in the spirit of such unreserved frankness? As to the sugar duty, he threw over in the beginning of his speech, the principles and doctrines contained in the resolution of his noble Friend, and said that the question was one of prudence, rather than of principle, and in the latter part of his speech he said, that the only pledge he would give about the sugar duties was, that he would wait to see whether the expected supply from the East Indies would cover deficiency in the duties, and that for the next year he should propose no change in the rate of duty; but the right hon. Baronet, reserved himself for the future, and beyond next year he would give us no pledge either way. Well, then we were to have his unreserved opinion on the subject of the Corn-laws. What was it? why that he preferred a sliding scale to a fixed duty. A sliding scale may be a slippery thing. The right hon. Baronet took care to guard himself against declaring whether that sliding scale would or would not be a scale materially diminishing that amount of inordinate protection which the present law affords. But the question he was called upon to answer is, whether he is willing or not to supply a part of the deficiency of the revenue, by creating an extension of our commerce, by means of a reduction in the present amount of the duty on corn? About the timber duties too we have had the right hon. Baronet's equally frank and candid declaration. If my ears did not deceive me, he said, that on that question he should keep himself totally unfettered for the future. That until he knew what is at present known only to my noble Friend the Secretary for the colonies, and until he should be put, like my noble Friend, into the confidence of the Governor-general of Canada, it would be utterly impossible for him to afford us any information as to his views. Well then, Sir, am I not justified in saying, that never do I remember a great question like the present, debated by one party on grounds so narrow and inadequate. The question is, whether the great springs of our national industry shall be relieved from some of those artificial obstructions, which have hitherto retarded their developement, or whether the sources of our national pro-

perity shall for the benefit of private interests, and of privileged classes, continue to be choked up? The question is between free trade, (and by free trade I mean trade open to competition) on the one side, and monopoly on the other. The question is between reason and prejudice; between the interests of the many, and the profits of the few—and the hon. Gentleman opposite, shrinking from a question which they dare not manfully grapple with, and afraid to join issue with us on the real merits of the case, because they know that the verdict of the country would be against them, have endeavoured to narrow the discussion down to one collateral point, and under a delusive pretence to entrap this House and the country into an erroneous decision. The epithet hypocritical applied to the resolution by speakers on this side has been taken amiss by Gentlemen opposite; I will endeavour not to repeat offensive expressions; I will content myself with saying that this resolution is the homage which monopoly pays to free trade. But an homage so unwilling and constrained that those who pay it have not been able entirely to assume the virtue which they do not feel; but have thought it prudent to leave themselves a loophole for escape; and by that notable parenthesis which was so well exposed by my noble Friend (Lord J. Russell) they have provided for themselves the means of descending if necessary from the lofty ground of principle on which they profess to take their stand, to the lower and more convenient level of expediency. Their course reminds me of that sometimes pursued by their friends the Spanish Carlists—on more than one occasion in the late civil war, the Carlists when wanting to attack the Queen's forces, placed and drove along at the head of their column a number of helpless captives, trusting that the humanity of their opponents would disarm their resistance, and that thus they should succeed in their attack. So now the hon. Gentleman opposite put forward the sufferings of the negroes. I forbear from inquiring how many of those who are foremost in the cry, have had their share in causing those sufferings; though some things have passed in this debate which tend to throw light upon such an inquiry. But they put forward the sufferings of the negroes, and under cover of that pretence the whole band of monopolists rush forward to scale the fortress of power. But



the party opposite stand upon principle against interest. The principle they stand upon is the principle of humanity; the interest they oppose is that of the 25,000,000 of people who inhabit these islands. Now, I honour and respect principle. I admire a man who acts upon principle, even though in carrying his principle out, he should thwart me, and obstruct my path. But then, let principle be the rule and not the exception. Let it be the guide of conduct, and the inspirer of actions, and let it not be merely put forward as a pretext for the purpose of arriving at unacknowledged ends. They say humanity is their principle—an excellent principle it is—charity is said to begin at home; why should not humanity also be a domestic virtue? True it is there are millions of suffering negroes abroad; true also is it that we have millions of suffering fellow-countrymen at home. Why should our humanity bestow itself exclusively on the former, instead of giving a due share of its attention to the latter? The principle laid down by Gentlemen opposite is, that we ought not to consume the produce of slave labour; that is the principle which has been maintained by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, who moved the resolution, but it was not so clearly asserted by the right hon. the Member for Tamworth. He seemed, indeed, to set it aside. This may have arisen from proofs which have been given by what has passed in other places, of the manner in which the people of the country view this matter; and I am not surprised, that at the close of this debate, the principle on which Gentlemen opposite laid such stress at the outset, should now be allowed in some degree to remain unnoticed. But the principle contended for is, that we ought not to consume the produce of slave-labour. Well, if that principle is to be adopted, apply it honestly, faithfully, and throughout. Prohibit the importation of the enormous quantities of cotton which are brought every year from the United States of North America. Prohibit the tobacco; prohibit the rice which you bring from thence and which is all the produce of slave labour. ["Oh!"] The hon. Gentlemen opposite laugh and cry Oh! at the very idea of such a thing—they shrink from such an application of their principle—they know that such an application of their principle would deprive of employment some millions of

their fellow-countrymen, and would bring them to utter ruin. They say it would not be expedient to do this; expedient, indeed! a pretty principle this to take stand upon, the practical application of which is to depend on comparative expediency. But they think they have an answer to this argument: they say it is one thing to submit to an evil that exists, it is another thing to create a new evil; and although we have long encouraged slave-labour in North America, that is no reason why we should now begin to encourage slave-labour in South America. But would the effect of our measure be that we should begin now, for the first time, to permit the consumption of things produced by slave-labour in South America? Do we not already encourage the employment of slave-labour in South America, and to the extent of our means? Do we not send out every year to the Brazils vast quantities of our manufactures, and are we not paid for them by the sugar and coffee which is there produced by the labour of slaves? Do we not glut the Brazilian market with our goods, and stimulate them every year more and more to produce more and more slave-labour commodities to buy those goods with? It is true that the sugar and coffee come not here but go to Germany to be sold, and it is the money they are sold for that is remitted to us; but does this alter the nature of the transaction? We are told that we must not encourage the employment of slave-labour, and yet we first set the slaves in North America to work, to produce for us as much cotton as possible, and then we add to the value of that cotton and send it out to South America in order therewith to set the slaves of South America to work, to produce as much sugar and coffee as they can. The details of these transactions of ours with the Brazilians are sufficiently curious to be worth following out. We say to the Brazilians we can supply you with cotton goods cheaper and better than any you can get elsewhere, will you buy them? By all means, reply the Brazilians, and we will pay you for your goods by our sugar and our coffee. No, say we, your sugar and coffee are produced by slave labour, we are men of principle, and our consciences will not allow us to consume the produce of slave-labour, we cannot take your sugar and your coffee. Well then, any body would

imagine that the transaction ended here ; that we sent our manufactures to some free labour market, and left the Brazilians to eat and drink their sugar and coffee, or to dispose of them as best they may. No such thing ; we are men of principle, but we are also men of business, and we try to help the Brazilians out of their difficulty. We say to them, it is true that we cannot consume your slave-labour sugar and coffee ; but close by us, and near at hand, live some forty millions of industrious thriving Germans who are not so conscientious as we are ; take your sugar to them ; they will buy it of you, and you can pay us for our cottons with the money you will thus receive ; and though we cannot take your sugar and coffee, we shall not scruple to take the money you have sold them for. But the Brazilians represent that there will be some difficulty in this. The Germans, they say, live on the other side of the Atlantic, we must send them our sugar in ships ; now our ships are few in number, and are ill-fitted to cope with the waves of the great ocean ; what shall we do ? Our reply is ready.—Do not let this disturb you, we have plenty of ships, and they are quite at your service. It is true that slave-labour produce would contaminate our warehouses, our shops, and our tables ; but our ships are different things, and they shall carry your sugar for you. But the Brazilians have another difficulty ; indeed there is no end to their difficulties. They tell us that the Germans are particular in their own way about these matters, and have a fancy for refined sugar. That it is not easy to refine sugar in Brazil, and that the Germans do not like the trouble of refining it themselves. Our desire to oblige is inexhaustible, we again step in with an expedient : Come never mind, we will help you here also ; we will not only carry your sugar, but we will refine it for you too. It is sinful, indeed, to consume slave-labour sugar, but there can be no harm in refining it, which, in fact, is to cleanse it from part of its original impurity. Accordingly we refine the sugar, and, to be sure, we think we have done. Not a bit. The Brazilians are at us again. The fact is, say they, we produce a great deal of sugar ; more than the Germans will buy, at least at a remunerating price ; what are we to do with our surplus ? Well, our goodness is infinite ; having carried the Brazilians on so

far, we are determined not to leave them till we have seen them safe home ; we have a remedy, we tell them, for this also ; we ourselves will buy your surplus. It cannot, indeed, be consumed at home, because the people of this kingdom are the inhabitants of the mother country, and are men of conscience ; but we will send it to the West Indies, and to Australia ; the people who live in those parts are only negroes and colonists, and what right can they have to consciences ; your slave-labour sugar can do them no harm : and now, that you may not plague us any more about these matters, we tell you at once, that if ever the price of our own sugar shall rise above a certain amount, we will then buy more of your slave-labour sugar, and eat it ourselves. Now, without meaning the slightest offence, let me ask if it is not the grossest hypocrisy, that when these things are as notorious as the sun at noon-day, we should be asked, on pretences so hollow, and so inconsistent with what is constantly going on, to forego an arrangement which will relieve our commerce, and assist our finances. But then it is said that the proposed measure will encourage the slave-trade. It can encourage the slave-trade only in as far as it may give any great additional stimulus to slave-labour, and I have already dealt with that objection. I can assure the House, that if we had thought that this measure would give to the slave-trade any encouragement, which we should not be able by other means amply to counterbalance, we would not have proposed the measure to Parliament, whatever might have been the advantages otherwise to be gained from it. I think we have given proof of the sincerity of our zeal for the suppression of the slave-trade. During the time we have had the honour to conduct the affairs of the country, we have laboured assiduously, perseveringly, and not without some success, in the pursuit of this great end. The suppression of the slave-trade is to be effected by two means—first, by the vigilance and activity of that maritime police, which, by virtue of our treaties with other powers, we are enabled to establish ; secondly, by those measures of internal administration which foreign governments may put into execution, either in compliance with our suggestions, or in fulfilment of treaties concluded with us. I contend that the measure which we pro-

pose will assist us in both these respects ; for it will give us a better chance of obtaining by treaty any additional powers and authority, which our maritime police may stand in need of ; and it will increase the disposition of foreign governments to fulfil the engagements they have taken towards us, to put down the slave-trade within their own territories. When we came into office in 1830, we found the slave-trade carried on to an immense extent, and under various flags, notwithstanding the treaties we had then concluded with Spain, Portugal, Brazil, the Netherlands, and Sweden ; and notwithstanding the declaration made at the Congress of Vienna, which was alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the University of Cambridge, and which cannot be mentioned with too much honour to the statesmen who proposed it, and to the Governments by which it was adopted. The treaties with Portugal and Spain were insufficient for their purpose. That with Portugal only applied to slave trade north of the line, and neither that nor the treaty with Spain gave sufficient powers for the detention of vessels equipped for slave trade. We had no treaty with France, and slave trade was carried on under the French flag. The first thing we did was to obtain a treaty with France, giving mutual right of search and detention to the cruisers of the two nations ; and when Gentlemen recollect how much the events of the last wars between England and France must have rendered such a mutual right distasteful to both nations, and repugnant to their feelings and their pride, the mere fact of such a treaty having been concluded, must be a convincing proof of the sincerity and zeal with which both Governments were animated in their endeavours to put down this traffic ; and the success of that treaty has been complete, for from that moment the slave trade has ceased to be carried on under the flag of France. Next we obtained from Spain, by a new treaty, larger powers for our cruisers, and fuller and more complete engagements on the part of the Spanish crown ; and I must say, that if the Spanish governors of Cuba had acted with good faith, and had rigidly enforced the law of Spain, and had punctually fulfilled the treaty engagements of the Spanish crown, their exertions, assisted by those of the British cruisers, would long since have entirely put an end to the

Cuba slave-trade ; and a similar result would have been obtained in Brazil, if the Brazilian government had executed with good faith and vigour the engagements it has contracted on this matter towards Great Britain. But we were told, and by many of the most zealous friends of abolition, that our treaties would be of no avail to suppress the slave-trade until every maritime state in Christendom should have joined in the league to put it down ; for as fast as we drove the trade from one flag it would take shelter under another, and that nothing effectual would be accomplished as long as any one flag remained by which it could be protected. We felt the truth of this assertion, and we set ourselves to work in right good earnest to enlist all the maritime states of the world in the Christian league against slave-trade. We have laboured hard, and I am proud to say not without some success. At the present moment we have treaties concluded and ratified with France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, the Hans Towns, Sardinia, Tuscany, and Naples ; we have been negotiating a treaty between England, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia, to be founded upon the treaty now existing between England and France. The details of this treaty have for several months been agreed upon, and the signature of the treaty has been delayed solely by the peculiar position in which France has for some time past stood with relation to the other four powers, and not in consequence of any difficulties as to the treaty itself ; and I trust that very shortly that treaty will be signed. When that treaty is signed we shall propose to Belgium, to Hanover, and to Greece to accede to it, and I trust there can be no doubt of our obtaining the accession of those states. The Greek government has indeed lately, and very much in consequence of representations made to it by the British Government, passed a law prohibiting under severe penalties that Mediterranean slave-trade in Greek vessels which had begun to attract the attention of Europe. If we succeed in all this, as I see no reason to doubt, we shall have enlisted all the maritime states of Europe in the Christian league. Nor have we been idle as to America. We have concluded treaties which have been ratified, with Brazil, Buenos Ayres, Venezuela, and Haiti ; we have concluded treaties which have not yet been ratified, with Mexico,

Montevideo, Chile, and Bolivia; and we have concluded additional articles which also have not yet been ratified with Brazil. We are negotiating a treaty with the republic of the Equator, and we have proposed an improved treaty to Brazil. We have also proposed a treaty to Peru, but the present disturbed state of that republic, prevents us, for the moment, from making any progress in that negotiation; the party now in power in Peru having set up the strange doctrine that Peru is not to make treaties with any but American States. Well, then, if we succeed in these various negotiations, which I have no reason to think we shall not, we shall have enlisted in this league against slave-trade every state in Christendom which has a flag that sails on the ocean, with the single exception of the United States of North America; and I cannot believe, that the American people, descended from the same ancestors as ourselves, imbibing from their earliest infancy the same principles of liberty, and the same doctrines of religion, will long stand aloof, and refuse to join the league, when they find themselves the only Christian nation that has not subscribed to its engagements. They have hitherto been deterred from doing so by the fear of agreeing to that mutual right of search which is the main foundation of all these treaties, and an indispensable means for the suppression of the slave-trade. But they have not sufficiently reflected, that the right of search which is necessary for the suppression of the slave-trade is a thing utterly and entirely different from that right of search, which on former occasions has been the subject of dispute between them and us. I trust that the people of America will not allow themselves to be carried away by names, but will investigate the nature of things; and when they find, as on consideration they must do, that what we ask is not inconsistent with their national honour, and is essential for abating a great evil, they will join the other states of Christendom, and give the slave-trade its death-blow. I think, then, that we may assert that our conduct proves, that we feel no indifference about this great question of the slave-trade; and that we are not men who would lightly, and in order to escape from a temporary difficulty, sacrifice a principle which has long guided our course, and forego an object which we have laboured so hard to attain. On the contrary, as I

have already said, by adopting the proposed measure, we shall acquire additional facilities for the accomplishment of our purposes. I have said, that the slave-trade would long since have been put down in the Brazils and in Cuba, if the Brazilian government, and the governors of Cuba, had chosen to enforce their own laws, and to fulfil the obligations of treaties concluded with us. Why have they not done so? Because they do not believe in the sincerity of our professions, and attribute our anxiety for the suppression of the slave-trade to motives very different from those which in reality prompt us. They see in us nothing but commercial enemies. On the one hand we shut our markets against their produce; on the other hand we try to prevent them from getting what they erroneously consider a necessary accession of labourers. They judge of one part of our conduct by the other. They see, that with a spirit of narrow-minded commercial jealousy, we exclude their produce, that it may not compete in our markets with the produce of our own colonies; they think, that we want to prevent them from getting fresh slaves, in order that thus their sugar may cost them more and may become dearer; and that so the sugar of our colonies may be better able to compete with their sugar in the market of Europe. I regret that much has been said in this debate, which is ill calculated to undeceive them in this point; for doctrines have been held in this discussion exactly the reverse of those which we press upon the Brazilians when urging them to abolish their slave trade. We have endeavoured to persuade them, that free labour is cheaper in the end than slave-labour, and that the cessation of the slave-trade would be no injury, but in fact a benefit to them. We have been justified in holding this language to the Brazilians, because we held it to our own West-India colonists. When we wanted them to agree to the emancipation of their slaves, we told them, that in the end they would find free labour less expensive than slave-labour, and we told them the truth; and nothing that has yet happened in the working out of the great experiment which we are making in the West Indies, leads me in the slightest degree to doubt that the assertion we made to them is true. But what has been the argument which has been maintained on this point in this debate by many Gentlemen opposite, most

connected with the West Indies, and best acquainted with the state of our colonies there. They have all contended, that if we admit to consumption in this country the sugar of the Brazils which they say is cheap, because it is the produce of slave-labour, our own sugar which they say is dear, because it is the produce of free labour, will be driven out of the market; and thus our Colonies will be ruined; and the hon. Member for the town of Cambridge pressed this argument with peculiar vehemence, saying, as a reason for his doing so, that on the decision of this matter, his dearest interest, nay, as far as his West-India property is concerned, his very existence depends. The great argument, then, of these Gentlemen is, that the free-labour sugar of the West Indies cannot compete with the slave-labour sugar of the Brazils; now what is this but declaring to the Brazilians and the Spaniards, that we have been telling them untruths all this while, as to the comparative cheapness of free labour? Will they not think that we have added to the odiousness of our commercial hostility, the meanness of duplicity and falsehood; that we have been endeavouring to trepan them into an abolition of their slave-trade upon false pretences; telling them that slave labour is the dearest, and, therefore, the least advantageous to them, though we knew and were convinced all the while, that it is the cheapest and most profitable. Let us convince them, by our conduct, that in our doctrine we were sincere. Let us convince them that we do believe free labour to be, as it unquestionably is, cheaper than slave labour. Let us do so by admitting their slave-labour sugar into competition with free-labour sugar in our market, not indeed into competition on equal terms, for that is not at present proposed, but into competition modified by a discriminating duty of fifty per cent. in favour of the produce of our own colonies. If this measure is carried, I shall enter into negotiation with the Brazilians and Spaniards with better hopes of success, and shall think that I have a better chance of persuading them to employ the means which they themselves possess, to put a stop to the slave-trade within their own territories; for they will listen to our remonstrances with a more willing ear, when they shall believe them to be dictated by principle, and when they shall no

longer suspect them to be the offspring of commercial jealousy. Sir, I lay the greater stress upon this, because it is only from England, and from the exertions of England, that any hopes can be entertained of the extinction of the slave-trade, and of the ultimate abolition of slavery throughout the world; because it is England alone that feels any deep and sincere interest in the matter. England now holds a proud position among the nations of the earth; and exercises a great influence upon the destinies of mankind. That influence is owing, in the first place, to our great wealth, to our unbounded resources, to our military and naval strength. But it is owing still more, if possible, to the moral dignity which marks the character and conduct of the British people. I fear that the resolution of the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, will tend, if adopted, to impair all these elements of our strength. I cannot but think that the respect which foreign nations have hitherto felt for the sincerity, the plain dealing, the straightforwardness of the British character, will be lowered, when they see the House of Commons adopting a resolution by which the principles of humanity and justice, are, (I am sorry to say so), prostituted to serve the party purpose of a day, and I am sure that we shall sap the foundations of our strength, if, by the continuance of our restrictive and prohibitory regulations, we undermine those great commercial and manufacturing interests which are the main supports of our power. Those who desire to see the principles of liberty thrive and extend through the world, should cherish with an almost religious veneration, the prosperity and greatness of England. As long as England shall ride pre-eminent on the ocean of human affairs, there can be none whose fortunes shall be so shipwrecked, there can be none whose condition shall be so desperate and forlorn, that they may not cast a look of hope towards the light that beams from hence; and though they may be beyond the reach of our power, our moral support and our sympathy shall cheer them in their adversity, and shall assist them to bear up, and to hold out, waiting for a better day. But if ever by the assault of overpowering enemies, or by the errors of her misguided sons, England should fall, and her star should lose its lustre, with her fall, for a long period of time, would the hopes of the African,

whether in his own Continent, or in the vast regions of America, be buried in the darkness of despair. I know well that in such case, Providence would, in due course of time, raise up some other nation to inherit our principles, and to imitate our practice. But taking the world as it is, and states as they are constituted, I do not know, and I say it with regret and with pain, I do not know any nation that is now ready in this respect to supply our place. I say, then, that they who are the sincere friends of that cause of which we have been the strenuous advocates, and the not wholly unsuccessful supporters, instead of giving their assistance to a resolution which is founded upon a hollow pretence, ought to lend their aid to us, and to help us to accomplish those purposes, which they themselves have so deeply at heart. Now, I have said, that the real question at issue is, the choice between monopoly and free trade. The noble Lord, the Member for Lancashire (Lord Stanley), and the right hon. Baronet who spoke last (Sir Robert Peel), have given us their views of the meaning of the term free trade; and defined it to be a trade free from all duties whatever upon the importation of foreign produce. That is not my notion of free trade. That is not the free trade which I wish to see introduced. We must have an army and a navy, and civil establishments. To maintain these we must have a revenue; and, in my opinion, there is no more proper or legitimate mode of raising a part of that revenue than by duties upon the importation of foreign commodities. But then I say, let those duties be laid on solely for purposes of revenue; let them not be laid on for what is called protection; that is, to enable a comparatively small number of men to carry on a trade in itself a losing one, at the expense of the rest of the community. I know that in an artificial state of society, such as that in which we live, it is impossible at once, and without some delay, to carry into full application, principles of this kind. Because, if suddenly adopted, they would derange the course of transactions, and involve thousands in ruin. To do this is neither our intention nor our wish. But let us keep these principles steadfastly in view; let them guide and direct our course; and let us apply them as nearly and as quickly as circumstances will permit. Protection, in the sense in

which the word is used by those who now oppose the plan of the Government, is a tax levied upon the industry and skill of the mass of the community to enable a few to remain indolent and unskilful. Such protection is not only erroneous in principle, but, after all, utterly useless to those for whose particular benefit it is maintained. Shew me a trade that is free, by which I mean, open to fair competition, and I will shew you a trade carried on with intelligence, enterprize, and success. Shew me a trade that is highly protected, and I will shew you a set of men, supine, unimproving, and probably labouring under perpetual embarrassment. But the evil does not end here. Not only does this excessive protection paralyze the very interests it is intended to invigorate; but it operates most injuriously upon the general welfare of the country, in relation to our commercial intercourse with foreign nations. For protection is a game that two can play at. It is impossible that a great country like England can go on protecting, as it is called, its various interests, and that other countries should not follow the example. Can we tell other countries that they ought to diminish the duties of their tariff; that competition is the very life of trade; that emulation inspires activity and enterprize, and that without enterprize and activity commerce can never flourish nor be beneficial to those who carry it on? Can we hold these doctrines to other nations, and at the same time persist in our own restrictive system? When we propound these principles to foreign Governments, they listen to our arguments with civil incredulity; they appeal from our doctrines to our practice; they point to our own tariff, and tell us, in diplomatic paraphrase, "When you alter your own commercial system; when you bring down to a moderate amount your excessive import duties, we may become converts to your doctrines, and shall be ready to talk with you about a revision of our own tariff." I have had to discuss these matters with most of the Foreign States with which we have commercial relations, and they are all in the same story. They invariably give us to understand, that when we ask them to permit a more liberal admission of our manufactured goods into their markets, we ought to set them the example, by allowing a more liberal admission of their produce into our market. Commerce, they observe, is a system of

barter, and if we exclude from our ports their corn, their timber, their sugar, their coffee, every great article, in short of their produce, which they could offer us in exchange for our commodities, how can we suppose that they can carry on trade with us? I have said, that one great evil of our restrictive system is, that it induces other states to fancy that it is the secret of our prosperity, and that it sets them to imitate our example. Is this an imaginary evil?—far from it. In proportion as the increase of communication between countries in time of peace, has enabled every country to be better informed as to what is going on elsewhere, other nations have seen more deeply into the details of our restrictive system, and have been tempted, some by ignorance, some by prejudice, some from a spirit of retaliation, to imitate our example. First, there is the Prussian Commercial Union, which has spread itself over almost all of the central and northern states of Germany. That league has just renewed itself by treaty for twelve years from 1842. Next year their deputies will meet for the purpose of revising their tariff, and this House and the country deceive themselves greatly if they imagine that a perseverance in our restrictive system, and in our prohibiting duties, will not induce the German League to continue their present high duties upon our manufactures, and perhaps to increase those duties in such a manner as to shut our commodities out from the whole of that part of the market of Europe. Russia and Sweden prohibit a great number of our manufactures, and when we ask them to relax their tariff, they say, take our corn and timber, and then we will talk with you about admitting your manufactures into our ports. About two years ago Sweden sent over here a nobleman of high distinction, and of great influence in his own country for the purpose of endeavouring to come to some agreement with us for a mutual modification of the tariffs of the two countries, but timber was our stumbling block, and we had no hope at that time of being able to carry through Parliament any arrangement of our timber duties that would have met the views of the Swedish government; we had had a mortifying experience but a short time before of the manner in which any proposition of that kind was likely to be dealt with in this House. France, which ought to be a great market for our commodities;

France, a country so near to us, producing many things which we want, and wanting many things which we produce; France has a tariff which excludes many of our principal manufactures. But France will not alter her tariff unless we alter ours. As an instance of the extent to which this mania of protection rages, France not content with prohibiting our cotton goods, and excluding by high duties our iron, has lately descended to a minuteness of protection which would be ludicrous if it were not an indication of the force of existing prejudices on these matters. France has lately laid an excluding duty upon our needles and fish hooks, for the purpose of protecting that important branch of her own national industry! The Belgians too are running wild with the notion of protection, and are for excluding by protecting duties almost every commodity which the industry of man can make. When you preach to these foreign nations the absurdity of such practices, they reply, it is all very well; but we observe that England has grown wealthy and great by these means, and it is only now, when other nations are following her example that she has discovered that this system is a bad one; when we shall have attained the same pitch of commercial prosperity which England has reached, it will then be time enough for us to abandon a system which perhaps may then no longer be necessary. It is in vain we tell these people, that England has grown great and prosperous, not by means of this fallacious and mischievous system, but in spite of it. It is in vain we tell them, that this protective system has checked our growth, and has prevented the full developement of our national resources. Until we prove by our practice, that we are sincere in our doctrines, neither France, nor Belgium, nor Germany, nor Russia, nor Sweden, nor any other country in either hemisphere, will be induced to relax their own restrictive and prohibitory laws. The United States of America have imitated our example, and have established a protecting tariff. The ill effect of this tariff upon the commerce between these two countries has been mitigated by the circumstance, that the Southern States are chiefly agricultural, and have few or no manufactures to protect, and that thus the protecting tariff of the north cannot prevent a great trade between the two countries, the result of which is to send over to us vast

quantities of that slave-labour cotton, which all parties have acknowledged it is so essential for us to have, and which it would be impossible for us to do without. Yet no man can doubt, that if England and the United States were mutually to revise their scales of import duties, the commerce between the two countries would greatly increase. But are the United States the only country in America where this vicious system has taken root? Mexico is following the example—and who, does the House think, are the parties who have petitioned the Mexican government for protection against the importation of British manufactures into Mexico? why some renegade sons of England, who have established manufactories in Mexico, and who are endeavouring to prevail upon the Mexican government to exclude, by high protecting duties, British manufactures of the same kind as those which they are themselves making. Such is the course which our restrictive system induces other countries to take. And what then is the state of our trade generally with other countries? It is quite true, as stated by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, that there is nothing in the condition of our foreign trade to inspire despondency; I trust that the resources of the country are too deeply rooted to be withered even by this vicious system, though it prevents their full growth and development. But if you examine and analyse our foreign trade, you will trace in it remarkable proofs of the injurious effects of this system. You will see how these protecting laws cramp the industry of the country. Every year a smaller and smaller portion of the manufactures which we export consists of articles in the making of which much labour and skill are employed. Every year a greater portion of our exports consists of articles of an elementary nature, which are not destined for use and consumption, but are to serve as materials which are to afford employment to the foreign manufacturers. For instance, the exportation of cotton goods does not increase in the same proportion as the exportation of yarn. Then again look to our artisan and capitalist. Both of them are leaving the country. The capitalist goes elsewhere with the notion of finding cheaper labour. The artisan with the hope of obtaining better remuneration for his industry. Every year our protecting system is raising up against us

in other parts of the world manufacturing competitors, and every year British skill, British industry, and British capital, are transferring themselves abroad, to render the competition of foreign countries more and more formidable. We are thus ourselves assisting to exclude our own commerce from the markets of other countries. If this system is persevered in, we shall at last come down to that spendthrift industry, which is to consist in exporting machinery, as well as the elements of manufactures, and when our exports consist of capital, skill, industry, machinery, and materials, we shall no doubt wonder how it happens, that our finished manufactures are no longer able to compete with those of other countries in the markets of the world. Sir, in my opinion, there never was a discussion in which it was more clear, which side of the House advocated the true interests of the nation; ay, even the interests of those nominally protected classes, whose supposed interests have banded together so large a phalanx in opposition to the proposals of the Government. But the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, has said, that we, the Government, have by the improvidence of our administration created the financial difficulties for the remedy of which we have brought forward these measures, and that we have ourselves been the cause of that excess of expenditure over income which our plan is intended to provide for. But surely the right hon. Gentleman does not mean to say, that the rebellion in Canada was owing to any misgovernment of ours; and as to our dispute with China, the right hon. Baronet has very properly and very handsomely abstained from prejudging a matter which is not yet ripe for discussion. But then I would ask, has the deficiency arisen from our having made any undue increase in our military or naval forces? Has it arisen from any wanton expenditure incurred by the Government in spite of the resistance of the hon. Gentlemen opposite? On the contrary, the Government has been found fault with year after year for not augmenting the military and naval establishments of the country. They have reproached us for too much economy, never for being too prodigal. The Gentlemen opposite have therefore no right to attribute the present deficiency to any mismanagement or misconduct on the part of the Government—it has arisen from a variety, and from a



combination of circumstances, over which the Government had no control; and I will venture to say, that if the Gentlemen opposite had been in office that deficiency would not have been less; I abstain giving an opinion whether it would have been greater. The question then is, whether the House will adopt the plan of my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for a reduction of duties, by which the revenue would be increased, the commerce of the country relieved, and the industry of all classes encouraged; or whether the House will take counsel from the Gentleman opposite who would supply the deficiency by betaking themselves to a loan, or by imposing fresh taxes, and by thus adding to the burthens of the country. Whatever may be the result of this discussion, and whether we succeed or not in our present attempt, depend upon it the days of these monopolies are numbered, and their doom is sealed. The only question is, whether they shall fall to day under our blow, or whether they shall be reserved to meet their fate hereafter from the hands of those very persons who now stand forward to defend them. To maintain them much longer is impossible, the country has spoken out upon the matter. The general opinion of all those persons who are engaged in carrying on the industry and commerce of the country is too strong to be resisted by any set of men who may be called upon to administer the Government. What has been the course of Parliament in this respect for several years past? It has done nothing but destroy monopolies. First we abolished that monopoly which by the Test and Corporation Acts the members of the Established Church held against their Dissenting fellow subjects; this was accomplished by the efforts of my noble Friend (Lord John Russell), assisted ultimately by the concurrence of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. Then was attacked that giant monopoly which the Catholic disabilities gave to the Protestants of the kingdom over their Catholic fellow countrymen. That monopoly defended itself with astonishing determination, its resistance was obstinate and fierce, but it measured its length upon the ground. Then was assailed that huge monopoly which placed in the hands of a comparatively small number of persons the power of returning Members to serve in the House of Commons. That battle

was still more severe, the resistance was still more desperate, the conflict almost shook the country to its foundations, but at last the victory was complete, and that monopoly fell. Then came the monopoly by which certain self-elected corporators exercised in the towns throughout the united kingdom, a paramount authority over the local interests and affairs of their respective boroughs. This was less vigorously defended, and it has fallen. Then there was the great monopoly by which the East-India Company excluded the commerce of their fellow countrymen from all the vast regions of Asia; that was acknowledged to be indefensible, and it yielded without a struggle. We are now attacking another set of monopolies, and my right hon. Friend, the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Labouchere), has announced, that he intends to carry the principle of relaxation still further, and to apply it to other parts of our tariff, so as to relieve our commerce from many of the trammels which at present confine it. These, then, are the principles on which we stand; our plan is plain, simple, and intelligible. I think that hon. Gentlemen opposite might have given us an equally plain and intelligible answer to our question, what they would propose to do. They might have told us distinctly, and at once, whether they would rest their plan of finance upon the abolition of monopolies; or upon the maintenance of monopolies. They have not however chosen to speak out, but I will venture to say, that before these discussions are brought to a close they will be compelled to speak out. It is due to themselves, it is due to us, it is due to Parliament, it is due to the country, that the opinions of hon. Gentlemen opposite upon these important matters should no longer be shrouded in mysterious silence, or be concealed by evasive declarations. We have a right to call upon them, not to give us a new budget, for that we do not want, and would not accept if offered it, but to tell us, aye or no, whether they will adopt the principles on which we have founded our budget, and of which the country has unequivocally expressed its approbation. But I will venture to predict, that although they may resist these measures to night for the purpose of obtaining thereby a majority in the division, yet if they should come into office, these are the measures, which a just regard for the finances and commerce of

the country will compel them, themselves, to propose and carry.

Lord *John Russell* said, that it might be for the convenience of the House if he stated the course which he intended to pursue in respect of the resolution, he had placed on the books, in case it should be negatived by the House. He proposed that resolution, in the first place, that he might record the principle of the budget of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer: and, in the next place, because he thought that the first discussion would turn entirely and totally on the question of the sugar duties. He thought that it might be desirable that they should have some question on which a more general debate could be taken; but as this debate had been so protracted, and so many subjects had been entered into in discussing it, he did not think it necessary to raise a debate on the resolution itself. He should content himself, therefore, after the division, by merely moving the resolution. Certainly some things had been said in the debate on which he wished to say a few words, and he thought it might be for the convenience of the House that he should then do so. In respect to the statement which had been made by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, he thought that the right hon. Gentleman had misapprehended what he (Lord J. Russell) had stated to the House in regard to the meaning of Mr. Huskisson. Some words had, he believed, fallen on a former occasion from his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, which might have been misunderstood, but he did not think that he had ever stated that the merit of supporting Mr. Huskisson was due the party to which he (Lord J. Russell) belonged, and did not properly belong to those who were then Mr. Huskisson's colleagues, and to the party who at the time surrounded him. The only statement that he (Lord J. Russell) remembered to have made of the sort was at the commencement of the present Session, before Easter, when he said that he was quite willing to give the credit of these principles—not to Mr. Huskisson only, but also to those who then acted as his colleagues; and he was quite satisfied, for his own part, that the whole merit of having first proposed those principles of commercial policy should rest with the colleagues of Mr. Huskisson and himself, and that they (the Liberals) should only

be considered as following in their footsteps. So far was he from entertaining any desire to claim for himself or his party, any of the merit which properly belonged to Mr. Huskisson and his supporters. The right hon. Baronet had alluded to the use of the term factious by him as applied to the Opposition, and had complained of the use of it. He did not now see any reason to modify or to retract that expression. It was intended to apply to their conduct upon the present occasion; and with regard to the finances of the country, the derangement of which had been fully and frankly laid before the House by his right hon. Friend in a manner which he (Lord J. Russell) had hoped would have led to a response from hon. Gentleman opposite,—he had confined his application of the expression to these particulars, and had not extended them to the general conduct of the right hon. Baronet. He was bound to state that on the privilege question, that of the Union of the Canadas, and that of the Poor-law and some other questions, the conduct of the right hon. Baronet had been as far as possible from deserving the epithet which had been complained of. The right hon. Baronet had concluded with some remarks as to the conduct of the Government, in which, after speaking of the talents, and characters, and principles of individual Members, he had nevertheless said that they (the Government) had not acted in accordance with the principles and spirit of the constitution. The right hon. Baronet had drawn a sort of comparison between the conduct of the present Government and that of his own when last in office. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion had been placed by the late King in a situation of entire confidence, as entire as that reposed in her Ministers, by her present Majesty. What was the course taken by the right hon. Baronet? In the first instance, though there was no great equality of parties in Parliament, or any peculiarities in the state of public affairs, calling for the dissolution of a Parliament that had only been two years in existence, the right hon. Baronet had recourse to the measure of an immediate dissolution in order to maintain his Government. That was the first step of the right hon. Baronet, one which he certainly would have thought right to have been taken on some large ground of necessity, or founded upon some extensive system of

public policy; but which, as far as he could judge, had only been adopted because the right hon. Gentleman had assumed the place of Lord Melbourne, and because he thought it necessary, in order to maintain the power thus assumed, to dissolve a Parliament which had hitherto carried on the public business with a decided majority in favour of Government. The short administration of the right hon. Baronet, with one exception, was a succession of Parliamentary defeats. Now he (Lord J. Russell) had never blamed the right hon. Gentleman in the perseverance which he had shown on the occasion. When he came down to the House stating that he was actuated by no love of power, no desire to cling to office, but that he thought it his duty to his sovereign to persist, and to continue to persist. When the right hon. Baronet came down to the House and stated these things, he (Lord J. Russell) had given him full credit for the determination which he then expressed. The only thing which he (Lord J. Russell) remarked in the resignation of the right hon. Baronet was, that in so doing he had acted in the spirit of the constitution, because he thought it was then sufficiently proved that he could not regain the confidence of the House of Commons—a House of Commons that had not then set three months after assembling subsequent to a dissolution. But while he (Lord J. Russell) said he did not blame the right hon. Baronet, he at the same time must say, that his course on the occasion in question seemed to him to afford a much stronger instance of a Government retaining office than anything that had occurred during the time the present Government had been in office. At the commencement of the last Session of Parliament, hon. Gentlemen opposite had thought it necessary to bring to the test the question whether those who sat on that (the Ministerial) side had the confidence of the House of Commons. The question was fully debated, and the House ultimately decided, by a majority of twenty-one, against the motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite. Now was not that a totally different case from any that had occurred during the administration of the right hon. Baronet. If, during the Session of 1835, the right hon. Baronet had obtained a majority of twenty-one in that House in his favour, on a vote of want of confidence, would he not have thought himself justified in assuming that

he had the confidence of the House? He (Lord J. Russell) was bound to say, that he would have been so justified. In looking back at all that occurred, he could not think that they had been wrong. Their probable successors did not certainly seem to enjoy the confidence of the country to such an extent as to justify them in taking their places. He would not say what might be the case at the present moment; but with regard to the result of the single elections, he must say, that he did not think they showed any decisive evidence. The right hon. Gentleman had given them no reason to hope that he would be favourable hereafter to the principles of which Ministers were the advocates. Even had he been compelled to oppose the proposition now on account of the state of the West-India interest, still it might have been better to have intimated the probability of some amelioration. He had certainly not been able to succeed in his endeavour to find means to produce regularity in the Corn-trade with the preservation of the sliding scale. Fluctuation, gambling, interruption of trade, and want of a market for our commodities would be the inevitable consequence of preserving that principle. If any great alteration were made in the law, preserving that principle, the change would be resisted on the other side with equal vehemence. However, he would not now enter into a further discussion of the Corn-laws, because he should have a future opportunity of doing so, he only wished to make one observation upon what had fallen from the noble Member for North Lancashire in reference to the trade in grain. That noble Lord had said that the producer of corn could not depend upon his own skill and industry, but must rely upon the sunshine or the storm for the abundance and scarcity of his crop. That was true as to the producer of a particular country; he must depend upon a higher power; but the same power that directs the storm had given a remedy for any local disadvantage, for such was the bounty and benevolence of Providence, that if in one country there was a bad season, and a deficient crop, another was blest with a good season, and an abundant harvest. It was fortunately in the power of man, by his skill and ingenuity, and the means they gave of traversing the ocean, to take advantage of the beneficence of the Creator. If that inter-

course were not permitted by short-sightedness and error, do not let it be said that it was to the infliction of heaven that a deficiency of food was to be attributed. Let the blame be laid where it was due. Let the laws be blamed which defeated the magnificent scheme by which plenty would be given to all the nations of the world, more or less, depending upon each other, and keeping up a kindly and a beneficial intercourse. Let the laws be blamed which blasted the fair prospects of a nation, and inflicted the curse of sterility, barrenness, and scarcity upon a land where plenty might reign, and marred the gracious designs of Providence by unjust legislation.

Sir R. Peel rose amid cries of "question," and solicited permission to explain upon a single point. The noble Lord had adverted to the proceedings of the House, and to the appointment of a noble Friend (the Marquess of Londonderry) to the embassy to Russia. The House had come to no vote on that occasion; but a motion had been made for the production of the appointment, which, in fact, had not taken place. He had been no party to the withdrawal of his noble Friend from the appointment, the retirement had been the act of his noble Friend, and of his noble Friend alone. If the House had proceeded to present an address to the Crown on the subject, it had been his (Sir R. Peel's) firm intention to have retired from office. He begged to repeat that the act of his noble Friend had not been counselled or suggested by him.

The question was then put as follows,

"That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:—Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the question, in order to add the words, 'considering the efforts and sacrifices which Parliament and the country have made for the abolition of the slave-trade and slavery, with the earnest hope that their exertions and example might lead to the mitigation and final extinction of those evils in other countries, this House is not prepared (especially with the present prospects of the supply of sugar from British possessions) to adopt the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government for the reduction of the duty on foreign sugars,' instead thereof:—Question put, 'That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.'"

The House divided:—Ayes 281; Noes 317: Majority 36.

### List of the AYES.

Abercromby, hn. G. R.	Duke, Sir J.
Acheson, Viscount	Duncan, Viscount
Adam, Admiral	Duncombe, T.
Aglionby, H. A.	Dundas, C. W. D.
Ainsworth, P.	Dundas, F.
Alston, R.	Dundas, D.
Andover, Viscount	Easthope, J.
Anson, hon. Colonel	Edwards, Sir J.
Archbold, R.	Elliot, hon. J. E.
Armstrong, A.	Ellice, Captain A.
Bainbridge, E. T.	Ellice, right hon. E.
Baines, E.	Ellice, E.
Bannerman, A.	Ellis, W.
Baring, rt. hon. F. T.	Erle, W.
Barnard, E. G.	Etwall, R.
Barron, H. W.	Euston, Earl of
Barry, G. S.	Evans, Sir De L.
Beamish, F. B.	Evans, G.
Bellew, R. M.	Evans, W.
Bewes, T.	Ewart, W.
Blackett, C.	Fazakerley, J. N.
Blake, M. J.	Fielden, J.
Blake, W. J.	Ferguson, Sir R. A.
Blake, M.	Ferguson, Colonel
Blewitt, R. J.	Fitzalan, Lord
Bodkin, J. J.	Fitzroy, Lord C.
Bowes, J.	Fitzwilliam, hn. G. W.
Brabazon, Lord	Fleetwood, Sir P. H.
Bridgeman, H.	Port, J.
Briscoe, J. I.	Fortescue, T.
Brocklehurst, J.	French, F.
Brodie, W. B.	Gillon, W. D.
Brotherton, J.	Gisborne, T.
Brown, R. D.	Gordon, R.
Bryan, G.	Grattan, H.
Buller, C.	Greenaway, C.
Buller, E.	Greg, R. H.
Bulwer, Sir L.	Greig, D.
Busfield, W.	Grey, rt. hn. Sir C.
Byng, G.	Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Byng, rt. hon. G. S.	Grosvenor, Lord B.
Callaghan, D.	Grote, G.
Campbell, Sir J.	Guest, Sir J.
Carew, hon. R. S.	Hall, Sir B.
Cavendish, hn. G. H.	Hastie, A.
Chalmers, P.	Hawes, B.
Childers, J. W.	Hawkins, J. H.
Clay, W.	Hayter, W. G.
Clements, Viscount	Heathcoat, J.
Clive, E. B.	Ilector, C. J.
Collier, J.	Hill, Lord A. M. C.
Collins, W.	Hindley, C.
Colquhoun, Sir J.	Hobhouse, rt. hn. Sir J.
Corbally, M. E.	Hobhouse, T. B.
Cowper, hon. W. F.	Hodges, T. L.
Craig, W. G.	Holland, R.
Crawford, W.	Horaman, E.
Currie, R.	Hoskins, K.
Dalmeny, Lord	Howard, hon. E. G. G.
Dashwood, G. H.	Howard, F. J.
Dennistoun, J.	Howard, P. H.
D'Eyncourt, rt. hn.	Howard, Sir R.
C. T.	Howard, hn. C. W. G.
Divett, E.	Howick, Viscount
Duff, J.	Hume, J.

Humphery, J.  
Hurst, R. H.  
Hutchins, E. J.  
Hutt, W.  
Hutton, R.  
James, W.  
Jervis, J.  
Jervis, S.  
Johnson, General  
Labouchere, rt. hn. H.  
Langdale, hon. C.  
Langton, W. G.  
Lascelles, hon. W. S.  
Leader, J. T.  
Lemon, Sir C.  
Lennox, Lord G.  
Lister, E. C.  
Listowel, Earl of  
Loch, J.  
Lushington, C.  
Lynch, A. H.  
Maule, rt. hn. T. B.  
Macnamara, Major  
M'Taggart, J.  
Marshall, W.  
Marland, H.  
Martin, J.  
Martin, T. B.  
Maule, hon. F.  
Melgund, Viscount  
Mildmay, P. St. John  
Milton, Viscount  
Molesworth, Sir W.  
Morpeth, Viscount  
Morris, D.  
Muntz, G. F.  
Murray, A.  
Musket, G. A.  
Nagle, Sir R.  
Noel, hon. C. G.  
Norreys, Sir D. J.  
O'Brien, C.  
O'Brien, W. S.  
O'Callaghan, hon. C.  
O'Connell, D.  
O'Connell, J.  
O'Connell, M. J.  
O'Connell, M.  
O'Ferrall, R. M.  
Ord, W.  
Oswald, J.  
Paget, Lord A.  
Paget, Colonel  
Palmer, C. F.  
Palmerston, Viscount  
Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.  
Pattison, J.  
Pechell, Captain  
Pendarves, E. W. W.  
Philips, Sir R.  
Philips, M.  
Philips, G. R.  
Phillips, J.  
Pigot, rt. hon. D.  
Pinney, W.  
Ponsonby, C. F. A. C.  
Ponsonby, hon. J.

Power, J.  
Price, Sir R.  
Protheroe, E.  
Pryme, G.  
Pryse, P.  
Ramsbottom, J.  
Rawdon, Col. J. D.  
Redington, T. N.  
Rice, hon. E. R.  
Rich, H.  
Rippon, C.  
Roche, E. B.  
Roche, W.  
Rumbold, C. E.  
Rundle, J.  
Russell, Lord J.  
Russell, Lord C.  
Rutherford, rt. hon. A.  
Salwey, Colonel  
Sanford, E. A.  
Scholefield, J.  
Scrope, G. P.  
Seale, Sir J. H.  
Seymour, Lord  
Sheil, right hon. B. L.  
Slaney, R. A.  
Smith, J. A.  
Smith, B.  
Smith, G. R.  
Smith, R. V.  
Somers, J. P.  
Somerville, Sir W. M.  
Standish, C.  
Stanley, M.  
Stanley, hon. W. O.  
Stansfield, W. R. C.  
Staunton, Sir G. T.  
Steuart, R.  
Stewart, J.  
Stuart, Lord J.  
Stuart, W. V.  
Stock, Mr. Sergeant  
Strickland, Sir G.  
Strutt, E.  
Surrey, Earl of  
Talbot, C. B. M.  
Talbot, J. H.  
Talfourd, Mr. Serg.  
Tancred, H. W.  
Tavistock, Marq. of  
Thornely, T.  
Troubridge, Sir E. T.  
Tufnell, H.  
Turner, E.  
Turner, W.  
Verney, Sir H.  
Villiers, hon. C. P.  
Vivian, Major C.  
Vivian, J. H.  
Vivian, rt. hn. Sir R. H.  
Wakley, T.  
Walker, R.  
Wall, C. B.  
Warburton, H.  
Ward, H. G.  
Wemyss, Captain  
Westenra, hon. H. R.

Westenra, hon. J. C.  
White, A.  
White, H.  
White, L.  
White, S.  
Wilbraham, G.  
Wilde, Sir T.  
Williams, W.  
Wilshere, W.  
Winnington, Sir T. E.  
Winnington, H. J.

Wood, C.  
Wood, Sir M.  
Wood, G. W.  
Wood, B.  
Wrightson, W. B.  
Wyse, T.  
Yates, J. A.

TELLERS.

Parker, J.  
Stanley, hon. E. J.

*List of the NOES.*

Acland, Sir T. D.  
A'Court, Captain  
Adare, Viscount  
Alexander, N.  
Alford, Viscount  
Antrobus, E.  
Arbuthnot, hon. H.  
Archdall, M.  
Ashley, Lord  
Ashley, hon. H.  
Attwood, W.  
Attwood, M.  
Bagge, W.  
Bagot, hon. W.  
Bailey, J.  
Bailey, J. jun.  
Baillie, Colonel  
Baillie, H. J.  
Baker, E.  
Baldwin, C. B.  
Baring, hon. F.  
Baring, hon. W. B.  
Barneby, J.  
Barrington, Viscount  
Basset, J.  
Bateson, Sir R.  
Bell, M.  
Benett, J.  
Bentley, Lord G.  
Berkeley, hon. H.  
Bethell, R.  
Blackburpe, I.  
Blackstone, W. S.  
Blair, J.  
Blakemore, R.  
Blennerhassett, A.  
Boldero, H. G.  
Bolling, W.  
Botfield, B.  
Bradshaw, J.  
Bramston, T. W.  
Broadley, H.  
Broadwood, H.  
Brooke, Sir A. B.  
Brownrigg, S.  
Bruce, Lord E.  
Bruce, C. L. C.  
Bruen, Colonel  
Bruges, W. H. L.  
Buck, L. W.  
Buller, Sir J. Y.  
Burr, H.  
Burrell, Sir C.

Burroughes, H. N.  
Calcraft, J. H.  
Campbell, Sir H.  
Canning, rt. hn. Sir S.  
Cantilupe, Viscount  
Castlereagh, Viscount  
Cavendish, hon. C.  
Cayley, E. S.  
Chapman, A.  
Cholmondeley, hon. H.  
Christopher, R. A.  
Chute, W. L. W.  
Clements, H. J.  
Clerk, Sir G.  
Clive, hon. R. H.  
Cochrane, Sir T. J.  
Codrington, C. W.  
Cole, hon. A. H.  
Colquhoun, J. C.  
Compton, H. C.  
Conolly, E.  
Cooper, E. J.  
Coote, Sir C. H.  
Corry, hon. H.  
Courtenay, P.  
Cresswell, C.  
Crewe, Sir G.  
Cripps, J.  
Dalrymple, Sir A.  
Damer, hon. D.  
Darby, G.  
Darlington, Earl of  
Davenport, J.  
De Horsey, S. H.  
Dick, Q.  
D'Israeli, B.  
Dottin, A. R.  
Douglas, Sir C. E.  
Douro, Marquess of  
Dowdeswell, W.  
Drummond, H. H.  
Dugdale, W. S.  
Dunbar, G.  
Duncombe, hon. W.  
Duncombe, hon. A.  
Dunganon, Viscount  
Du Pré, G.  
East, J. B.  
Eaton, R. J.  
Egerton, W. T.  
Egerton, Sir P.  
Eliot, Lord  
Ellis, J.

Estcourt, T.  
 Farnham, E. B.  
 Farrand, R.  
 Fielden, W.  
 Fellowes, E.  
 Fikner, Sir E.  
 Fitzroy, hon. H.  
 Fleming, J.  
 Foley, E. T.  
 Follett, Sir W.  
 Forester, hon. G.  
 Fox, S. L.  
 Freshfield, J. W.  
 Gaskell, J. M.  
 Gladstone, J. N.  
 Gladstone, W. E.  
 Glynn, Sir S. R.  
 Goddard, A.  
 Godson, R.  
 Gordon, hon. Captain  
 Gore, O. W.  
 Goring, H. D.  
 Goulburn, rt. hon. H.  
 Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.  
 Granby, Marquess of  
 Grant, Sir A. C.  
 Greene, T.  
 Grimsditch, T.  
 Grimston, Viscount  
 Hale, R. B.  
 Halford, H.  
 Hamilton, C. J. B.  
 Hamilton, Lord C.  
 Handley, H.  
 Harcourt, G. G.  
 Harcourt, G. S.  
 Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.  
 Harland, W. C.  
 Hawkes, T.  
 Hayes, Sir E.  
 Heathcote, G. J.  
 Heneage, E.  
 Heneage, G. W.  
 Henniker, Lord  
 Hepburn, Sir T. B.  
 Herbert, hon. S.  
 Herries, rt. hn. J. C.  
 Hill, Sir R.  
 Hillsborough, Earl of  
 Hinde, J. H.  
 Hodgson, F.  
 Hodgson, R.  
 Hogg, J. W.  
 Holmes, hn. W. A.  
 Holmes, W.  
 Hope, hon. C.  
 Hope, H. T.  
 Hope, G. W.  
 Hotham, Lord  
 Houldsworth, T.  
 Houstoun, G.  
 Hughes, W. B.  
 Hurt, F.  
 Ingestre, Viscount  
 Ingham, R.  
 Inglis, Sir R. H.  
 Irton, S.

Irving, J.  
 Jackson, Mr. Serg.  
 James, Sir W. C.  
 Jermyn, Earl  
 Johnstone, H.  
 Jones, J.  
 Jones, Captain  
 Kelly, F.  
 Kemble, H.  
 Kerrison, Sir E.  
 Kelburne, Viscount  
 Kirk, P.  
 Knatchbull, rt. h. Sir E.  
 Knight, H. G.  
 Knightley, Sir C.  
 Law, hon. C. E.  
 Lefroy, rt. hon. T.  
 Lennox, Lord A.  
 Liddell, hon. H. T.  
 Lincoln, Earl of  
 Lindsay, H. H.  
 Litton, E.  
 Lockhart, A. M.  
 Long, W.  
 Lowther, hn. Colonel  
 Lowther, Viscount  
 Lowther, J. H.  
 Lucas, E.  
 Lushington, rt. hn. S.  
 Lygon, hon. General  
 Mackenzie, T.  
 Mackenzie, W. F.  
 Mackinnon, W. A.  
 Maclean, D.  
 Mahon, Viscount  
 Maidstone, Viscount  
 Manners, Lord C. S.  
 Marsland, T.  
 Marton, G.  
 Master, T. W. C.  
 Mathew, G. B.  
 Maunsell, T. P.  
 Meynell, Captain  
 Miles, W.  
 Miles, P. W. S.  
 Miller, W. H.  
 Milnes, R. M.  
 Monypenny, T. G.  
 Mordaunt, Sir J.  
 Moreton, hon. A. H.  
 Morgan, O.  
 Neeld, J.  
 Neeld, J.  
 Nicholl, J.  
 Norreys, Lord  
 Northland, Lord  
 Ossulston, Lord  
 Owen, Sir J.  
 Packe, C. W.  
 Pakington, J. S.  
 Palmer, R.  
 Parker, M.  
 Parker, T. A. W.  
 Patten, J. W.  
 Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.  
 Peel, J.  
 Pemberton, T.

Percival, Colonel  
 Pigot, R.  
 Planta, rt. hn. J.  
 Pinmpire, J. P.  
 Polhill, F.  
 Pollen, Sir J. W.  
 Pollock, Sir F.  
 Powell, Colonel  
 Powerscourt, Visct.  
 Praed, W. T.  
 Price, R.  
 Pringle, A.  
 Pusey, P.  
 Rae, right hn. Sir W.  
 Reid, Sir J. R.  
 Richards, R.  
 Rickford, W.  
 Rolleston, L.  
 Rose, rt. hn. Sir G.  
 Round, C. G.  
 Round, J.  
 Rushbrooke, Colonel  
 Rushout, G.  
 St. Paul, Sir H.  
 Sanderson, R.  
 Sandon, Viscount  
 Scarlett, hon. J. Y.  
 Shaw, right hon. F.  
 Sheppard, T.  
 Shirley, E. J.  
 Sibthorp, Colonel  
 Smith, A.  
 Smyth, Sir G. H.  
 Smythe, hon. G.  
 Somerset, Lord G.  
 Sotheron, T. E.  
 Spry, Sir S. T.  
 Stanley, E.  
 Stanley, Lord  
 Stewart, J.  
 Sturt, H. C.  
 Style, Sir C.  
 Teignmouth, Lord  
 Tennent, J. E.  
 Theiger, F.  
 Thomas, Col. H.  
 Thompson, Mr. Ald.  
 Thornhill, G.  
 Tollemache, F. J.  
 Tomline, G.  
 Townley, R. G.  
 Trench, Sir F.  
 Trevor, hon. G. R.  
 Trotter, J.  
 Tyrell, Sir J. T.  
 Vere, Sir C. B.  
 Verner, Colonel  
 Villiers, Viscount  
 Vivian, J. E.  
 Waddington, H. S.  
 Walsh, Sir J.  
 Walter, J.  
 Welby, G. E.  
 Whitmore, T. C.  
 Wilbraham, hon. B.  
 Williams, R.  
 Williams, T. P.  
 Wilmot, Sir J. E.  
 Wodehouse, E.  
 Wood, Colonel  
 Wood, Colonel T.  
 Worsley, Lord  
 Wyndham, W.  
 Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.  
 York, hon. E. T.  
 Young, J.  
 Young, Sir W.

TELLERS.

Baring, H.  
 Fremantle, Sir T.

(Not Official.)

Paired off.

NOES.

Acland, T. D.  
 Burdett, Sir F.  
 Cartwright, W. R.  
 Copeland, W. T.  
 Duffield, T.  
 Eastnor, Lord  
 Egerton, Lord F.  
 Fector, J. M.  
 Gore, W. R. O.  
 Heathcote, Sir W.  
 Jenkins, Sir R.  
 Jones, W.  
 Kerr, D.  
 Morgan, C.  
 Palmer, G.  
 Sinclair, Sir G.  
 Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.  
 Vernon, G.

AYES.

Crawley, S.  
 Cave, hon. R. O.  
 Anson, Sir G.  
 Morrison, D.  
 Roche, Sir D.  
 Campbell, W. J.  
 Denison, W. J.  
 Chapman, Sir M.  
 Crompton, Sir S.  
 Wallace, R.  
 O'Connor Don  
 Shelburne, Lord  
 Walker, C. A.  
 Heron, Sir R.  
 Chichester, Sir B.  
 Sharpe, General  
 Butler, hon. P.  
 Spencer, hn. Captain

Absent.

Berkeley, hon. C.  
 Berkeley, hon. G.  
 Bernal, R.

Chetwynd, Major  
 Clayton, Sir W.  
 Davies, Colonel

Dundas, hon. J.	Heathcote, Sir G.
Dundas, hon. Sir R.	Lambton, H.
Fenton, J.	Maher, J.
Fitzgibbon, hn. Col.	Pease, J.
Fitzpatrick, J. W.	Parker, R. T.
Grattan, J.	Strangways, hon. J.
Hallyburton, Lord D.	

### Analysis of the Division.

Majority for Lord Sandon's resolution	
(Tellers included) . . .	319
Minority against (Tellers included) . . .	283
Pairs 18 . . .	36
Ministerialists absent . . .	18
Conservatives absent . . .	1—19
Speaker . . .	1
	<hr/> 658

On the question, that the question as amended be agreed to,

Lord John Russell moved to leave out from the word "considering" to the end of the amendment, in order to add the following words :—

"That it is practicable to supply the present inadequacy of the revenue to meet the expenditure of the country, by a judicious alteration of protective and differential duties, without any material increase of the public burdens ; such a course, will, in the opinion of this House, promote the interests of trade, afford relief to the industrious classes, and is best calculated to provide for the maintenance of public faith and the general welfare of the people."

Mr. Fielden moved, that the debate upon this amendment be adjourned. The motion fell to the ground for want of a seconder.

The resolution moved by Lord John Russell was negatived. Main question agreed to as follows :—

"Resolved, that considering the efforts and sacrifices which Parliament and the country have made for the abolition of the slave-trade and slavery, with the earnest hope that their exertions and example might lead to the mitigation and final extinction of those evils in other countries, this House is not prepared (especially with the present prospects of the supply of sugar from British Possessions) to adopt the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government for the reduction of duty on foreign Sugars."

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, May 20, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time :—Felony Explanation ; Boroughs Improvements ; Building Regulations.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Bethell, Mr. Bell, Sir C. Knightley, and Mr. Goulburn, from the East Riding of York, Dunchurch, Cambridge, and several other places, in favour of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. H. Berkeley, Sir M.

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Wood, Mr. James, Mr. Sheppard, Mr. P. Howard, Colonel Davies, and other hon. Members, from Bristol, Crippllegate, Frome, Cumberland, Carlisle, Worcester, Lancaster, and a great many other places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Wyse, from Roman Catholics, for the Establishment of Provincial Colleges in Ireland.—By Mr. Greene, from Lancaster, against the proposed Alteration in the Timber Duties.—By Mr. Colquhoun, from Wesleyans and others, against any further Grant to Maynooth.—By Mr. Currie, from Northampton, against Church Rates.—By Colonel Verner, and Mr. Litton, from the North of Ireland, and Dublin, against Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland.—By Mr. Hughes, and Mr. Darby, from Carnarvon, and Leigh (Essex), for Church Extension.

THE LATE DIVISION.] Mr. Fielden said, it would be in the recollection of hon. Members, that, yesterday morning, after the resolution of the noble Lord had been put to the House, he had proposed an adjournment of the debate ; that motion had been seconded by the hon. Member for Finsbury, and since he had come to the House that evening, he had been told, that the hon. Member for Ashton, who was in the gallery at the time, had also seconded it. Now that motion ought to have been entertained. He had been asked by his hon. Friend, the Member for Kilkenny, to withdraw his motion, on the understanding that at some future time he should have an opportunity of stating his opinions on the subject. What he complained of was, that his motion for adjourning the debate had been disposed of without his consent. The Speaker had never asked him if he would take the sense of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had not put it to the House if they would divide on it. He thought he had a right to complain. It was a question affecting the privilege of his constituents. He thought it probable, that the House might have rejected his motion, but he complained of its having been rejected without a division. His hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny could bear testimony that he had been asked to withdraw his motion, on the understanding that he should have an opportunity given him, on some future occasion, of speaking on the subject of the previous debate ; and he had risen to speak when the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had proposed his amendment. He had risen more than a dozen times during the debate to make known his sentiments, but had not been able to attract the Speaker's notice. He did not complain of that. He knew how difficult it was for the Speaker to see every Member who rose. But yesterday morning, between three and four o'clock, he had risen to move the adjournment, as he wished to enter into explanations as to the

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reasons which would influence him in giving his vote. He had been asked to proceed with his speech, but he refused to do so, and at that hour of the morning it could hardly have been expected. He wanted to know why his motion for the adjournment was rejected—why it was not put from the Chair—and a division taken on the question of adjournment. Before he said anything more, he hoped to have an answer to that question.

The *Speaker* felt, that he could give the best answer to the question of the hon. Member, and he could state, that if the motion had been seconded, he should certainly have put it from the Chair. After the hon. Member had put the question, he (the *Speaker*) asked who seconded the motion, and he paused two or three seconds for an answer. No hon. Member in his view seconded it, and he had then proceeded to read the question to the House. As he was reading the question he saw the hon. Member for Finsbury rise, but he did not understand him to say a single word, or to second the motion. He appealed to hon. Members near him whether he was in error, and they concurred with him that the hon. Member had not addressed the House. He concluded, therefore, that the motion was not seconded, and he certainly did not see the hon. Member in the gallery; he had only heard that since the adjournment, and was not aware of it at the time. If he had been aware of it, of course it would have been his duty to put the question.

Mr. *Wakley* could easily understand that the *Speaker* was in doubt and difficulty as to what was passing in the House. There was certainly noise and confusion in his (Mr. *Wakley's*) part of the House, as well as near the Chair. He recollected the *Speaker* asking who seconded it, and he (Mr. *Wakley*) had risen from his seat, and said, "I do Sir," but he could easily believe that the *Speaker* did not hear him, for there was considerable noise in his part of the House, and several hon. Members cried "Don't second it."

Sir *R. H. Inglis* saw the hon. Member for Finsbury rise, but did not hear him say a single word.

Mr. *Fielden* was understood to ask why, when he had risen a second time to press his question, it was not put?

The *Speaker* had omitted to state why the question was not put when the hon. Member rose a second time. The hon. Member did not rise until after the voices

had been given in the negative, and the hon. Member's motion could not then, according to the practice of the House, be put. He would also state, that when he observed no hon. Member rise and second the motion, he had said, in the hearing of several hon. Members near him, "There is no seconder."

Mr. *Fielden*, not having had an opportunity of speaking during the debate, would send the speech he intended to make to the newspapers. And he would tell them more, that what he had sent he had written before, and if hon. Members would write beforehand what they intended to speak, they would save a great deal of the time of the House. That would enable hon. Members and the public to see what were his sentiments on the subject.

**SUGAR DUTIES.]** The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*: Sir, I give notice that, on Monday next, I will move that the House shall resolve itself into a Committee of Ways and Means, with a view to move the usual annual Sugar Duties therein.

[This announcement occasioned much astonishment, and the House was crowded, expecting to hear some intimation of resignation or an explanation of the cause of not resigning.]

**ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE—CORN LAWS.]** Lord *J. Russell* moved, that this House, at its rising, do adjourn to Monday.

The Earl of *Darlington*: as it appears to be the intention of the noble Lord— notwithstanding the division of the other night—to cling with an unparalleled tenacity to office, after the sense of the House of Commons has been unequivocally declared against him, may I ask, on what day he intends to bring forward the question of the corn-laws?

Lord *J. Russell*: On Friday the 4th of June.

House at its rising to adjourn to Monday.

**ROYAL MARINES.]** Lord *G. Lennox* rose to bring forward the motion of which he had given notice, relative to the report of the naval and military commission. That commission had sat for two years, at the close of which period they furnished their report. It was not for him (Lord *George Lennox*), to impugn, nor did he mean to impugn, the report of that commission. But what he complained of was, that the



recommendations of the commissioners respecting the officers of the army, navy, and ordnance, had been attended to, and carried out by the heads of these several departments, whereas that which related to the Marines had been neglected. He hoped that the marine officers would soon be put upon an equal footing with the officers of the navy, and that the day was not far distant when a marine officer would even act as a Lord of the Admiralty. He regretted that there appeared a disposition to evade the just claims of this gallant body of men. He formerly moved for the appointment of a committee on the subject; he was met by the objection, that the proper course of proceeding was by an address to the Crown. He adopted the suggestion, and moved an address to her Majesty, and then he was informed that he should have moved for a committee. He confessed he looked for the support of the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs upon this occasion. That noble Lord had possessed many opportunities of testing the merit of the marines, and had, on several occasions, found them eminently useful when engaged on foreign service. The noble Lord must be fully sensible of the efficient manner in which the gallant corps had discharged their duty at Lisbon, in Spain, and recently on the coast of Syria. Looking to the manner in which the corps had been employed in carrying out the noble Lord's policy, they might not inaptly be called "*Palmerston's Own*." The noble Lord concluded by moving, that the House should resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the report of the naval and military commission, as relates to the recommendations relative to the Royal Marines.

Sir *H. Vivian*, having been a member of the naval and military commission, was anxious to say a very few words upon the question. He could assure the noble Lord, and the House, that the members of that commission were actuated by a sincere desire to do justice to that distinguished corps, the Marines, and to further promotion in it. The noble Lord had complained of the small amount of the promotions in the corps, compared with those in other branches of the service; but that, he could assure him, was the result of accidental circumstances. It would be found impossible to equalize promotions by any arrangements. He would only repeat, that the commission was most anxious to do justice

to the corps, more particularly after they were deprived of the assistance of a gallant officer of marines who was appointed a member of the commission.

Sir *A. Dalrymple* said, he had voted with the noble Lord formerly, when he proposed an address to the Crown upon this subject; but the Queen having been pleased to appoint a commission, he would not concur in doing anything which would have the appearance of sitting in judgment on the proceedings of that commission.

Sir *C. Adam* concurred in the view taken by the last speaker. It would be most inconvenient, and contrary to the practice of the constitution, to interfere with the commission. The hon. and gallant Member referred to the report of the commission, to show that great promotions had taken place since the Order in Council in 1837; that officers who were unfit for duty had been allowed to retire upon their full pay; and that the recommendations of the commission had been carried out as respected inefficient officers, every one of whom had been provided for. For his own part, though he should resist the motion, he held the marines in the highest estimation, and would do all in his power to serve them.

Viscount *Ingestrie* thought, that after the report which the commission had made, it would not be advisable to take the course proposed by the noble Lord. He was of opinion also, that a committee of the House of Commons was not the proper tribunal before which such a subject should be investigated. He must, therefore, give his vote against the motion; but he hoped that vote would not be regarded as a proof that he took no interest in the welfare of the marine corps.

Captain *Boldero* said, that while the pay of the other branches of the service had been liberally increased, the marines had remained unnoticed. He believed, indeed, that the recommendations of the commission had been carried into effect with regard to almost every other department, except that of the Royal Marines. Considering the brilliant services which that body of men had performed for the country, he must say that it savoured something of ingratitude, that it should be necessary to drive at those in power continually, in order to get justice done to them. For the first time they had heard of two marine officers having received a brevet rank, those officers having been in the action of the Shannon and the Chesapeake. But this neglect had

gone on all through the war. He should support the motion of the noble Lord, unless the gallant Admiral would make some promise that would render a committee unnecessary.

Mr. *C. Wood* believed that every one of the recommendations of the commission had been carried into effect. The number of promotions given by the Board of Admiralty to the marines in proportion to the amount of the force employed was unexampled. He looked upon the motion of his noble Friend as totally uncalled for, inasmuch as the Board of Admiralty had complied with all the suggestions made by the commission, except on the single point of prize-money. It was impossible to do more in the way of increasing superannuations and retirements, without forcing to retire men who were every way competent to do the duties of active service, which would be impolitic in the extreme.

Mr. *Hume* thought that no complaint could be brought against the Government the course it had pursued with reference to the marine corps. Formerly he had thought this branch of the service much neglected; but since the appointment of the naval and military commission, it seemed that full justice had been done to them. There were, however, one or two recent instances in which he thought promotions should have been made. He alluded particularly to the case of Captain *Spry* and another old marine officer, who had served together in Commodore *Napier's* ship, the *Powerful*, during the late hostilities on the coast of Syria, and had partaken of all the glory which attached to the British arms on that occasion. These old officers, one of whom had served for thirty-five years, were left without promotion, although most of the naval officers who served in the *Powerful* had been raised to higher rank. He thought the case of these veterans highly deserving the notice of the Admiralty.

Lord *A. Lennox* cordially agreed with the hon. Member, as to the propriety of rewarding Captain *Spry* and the other marine officer of Commodore *Napier's* ship. He trusted that his noble relative would not press the motion to a division, as he hoped the notice taken of the subject would be sufficient to induce the Lords of the Admiralty to do their utmost to benefit the service.

Sir *C. Adam* was understood to state, that all the marine officers who served on

the coast of Syria had been promoted, but that some delay had arisen in the case of Captain *Spry*. It was, however, fully intended that he should be promoted.

Captain *Pechell* was ready to support the noble Lord in any motion which would benefit the corps of Royal Marines. He would, however, recommend him to withdraw the present motion, in the hope that what had been said would influence the treatment of that body.

Lord *G. Lennox* replied, and intimated that, as the House was then so exceedingly thin, he should not put it to the trouble of a division.

Motion negatived.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS.] Mr. *Thomas Duncombe* rose to call the attention of the House to the petition of Samuel Cousins (presented 23d March), and to move,—

“That under the provisions of the Act for amending the representation of the people of England and Wales, it is incumbent on the clerk of the peace of every county to write or print the register of electors annually, and to furnish copies of the same at the most reasonable price. That by a return made to this House on the 4th day of May, 1840, it appears that the register of electors for the county of Hertford is charged at 89*l.* for each of the years 1837 and 1838, and that, by the same return, it appears that in counties where the register is printed the price charged for the same, where the number of electors vary from 4,000 to 6,000, is from 4*s.* to 10*s.* each. That the omission hitherto to print the register of electors for the county of Hertford, and to furnish copies at a reasonable price, has been productive of great inconvenience, and is an infringement on the rights of the electors of the said county in the exercise of their franchise to return Members to Parliament. That a copy of the register of electors for the county of Hertford, for the year 1840, ending 1841, be forthwith laid before this House.”

The hon. Gentleman stated, that finding there was no objection to these resolutions, with the exception of the second, which he should not press, he should not trouble the House with a discussion, but would merely move the resolutions, omitting the second paragraph.

Resolutions, with the omission of the second, were agreed to.

ANATOMY ACT.] Mr. *Maclean* moved for returns of the number of inspectors appointed under 2 and 3 William 4th., c.

75, commonly called the Anatomy Act, and the districts under their separate inspection. Of the amount of salary paid to each inspector, and allowance for travelling expenses in each year from 1836 to 31st day of December, 1840, inclusive. Of the number of visits made by each inspector, to the several schools of anatomy within his district, specifying the name of the school, and date of each visit, from 1833 to 1840, inclusive. Of all subjects sent to the several colleges and hospitals, and schools of anatomy; specifying the number to each, and the date thereof. Of each inspector's report to the Home-office, of all contraventions of the Anatomy Act by teachers or students, from the year 1833 to 1840, inclusive; and also (if any) what proceedings have been taken thereon.

Mr. Fox Maule was prepared to assent to the motion, with the exception of that part of it which called for a return "of all subjects sent to the several colleges and hospitals, and schools of anatomy; specifying the number of each, and the date thereof." That part of the motion, he should oppose.

Mr. Maclean was willing at the present moment to take what he could get; but on a future occasion he should move for the whole of this information, and for the appointment of a committee to consider the subject. He would not now press that part of the return which was objected to.

Mr. Warburton believed, that the Anatomy Bill had worked well, and that no complaint had been made against it from any of the schools.

Mr. T. Duncombe begged to correct his hon. Friend who had just spoken. It was due to the medical men, whose petitions he (Mr. Duncombe) had presented, to state, that very great dissatisfaction existed as to the operation of the Anatomy Act. He was only sorry that the Under-Secretary of State (Mr. F. Maule) did not feel it consistent with his duty to give the whole of the returns for which the hon. Member for Oxford had moved. Some of the petitions stated that certain hospitals carried on a regular trade in bodies, and he thought that the time had arrived when some inquiry ought to be instituted into the working of the Act.

Mr. Wakley said, it was a mistake to suppose that the secretary had power to

direct the distribution of subjects under the act, neither had the inspectors, unless upon an agreement with the lecturers on the science of anatomy. Such an arrangement had been made between the profession and the inspectors, and therefore the former had no right to complain of the act, which had nothing whatever to do with these arrangements. If any complaint could justly have been made, such complaints would have reached the House. But this was a subject which could not with advantage be mooted in this place, but whenever it might be so, he hoped it would be discussed with temper. He thought the act was one of the greatest boons ever conferred upon London, for it had put an end to the nefarious system of body snatching and worse, and he was sure, that if anything happened to cause the repeal of that law, the horrid scenes of which everybody had heard would be renewed with all their atrocities.

Mr. Maclean said, he had taken this course in consequence of the petitions which he had himself presented on this subject, containing complaints which he believed to be correct. He concurred that if this act was effectually carried into effect it would be a considerable boon, in putting a stop to the scenes which he had spoken of. But if it were not carried out in true sincerity—if private arrangements were made which ought not to be made, dissatisfaction would be produced, and the best way to put an end to that dissatisfaction would be by the production of the information he sought for, in consequence, he repeated, of the information which had reached him. He therefore hoped no time would be lost in laying the particular return now objected to upon the Table of the House.

Mr. Fox Maule said, he would be happy to give every information in reference to the appointments under the act, and as to the salaries of the officers who had to carry it into effect. He would also feel happy in laying before the House such general information in regard to the number of complaints as it was in his power to give; but he could not give the hon. Gentleman opposite either the returns in regard to the operation of the act as connected with the science of anatomy, or those specific complaints made against individuals for the infringement of the act. He thought that the act had worked admirably, especially in one respect; for no one could

deny but that the practices so frequent before the passing of the act had since then totally ceased.

Lord *John Russell* said, that there certainly had been suggestions made to the Government in regard to the carrying the act into effect; but he believed that he left the Home-office immediately after these suggestions were made, and had not consequently given them his consideration. He agreed with the hon. Member for *Finsbury*, that it would have the worst effect on the operation of the measure, if they were at the present time to institute an inquiry of the nature proposed by the hon. Gentleman opposite. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Gentleman would refrain from taking this step, as it might for the future prevent the act from being carried into effect in the mode in which it was at present; and it would also interfere with the adoption of any further suggestions which might be given.

Mr. *Maclean* trusted that the production of the necessary documents would put it out of his power to bring the question again before the House; but unless this was done, he would consider himself bound to renew his motion.

Returns, as modified by Mr. *Fox Maule*, ordered.

COPYHOLDS.] On the motion of Mr. *Hope*, the Copyhold and Customary Tenure Bill was re-committed.

Mr. *Rickford* moved a clause to empower tenants to enfranchise.

Mr. *Hope* opposed the clause, on the ground that it was inconsistent with the principle of the bill.

Mr. *Philip Howard* hoped his hon. Friend would not press his amendment, as it would endanger the whole bill.

Mr. *Rickford* was happy to find that the principle of his clause met with the general approbation of the House, but finding that if he were to press it to a division it would endanger the passing of the bill itself, he begged leave to withdraw it.

Clause withdrawn.—Bill went through committee.

The House resumed.—Bill to be reported on Monday.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Monday, May 24, 1841.*

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By the Duke of Wellington, Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, Lord Yarmouth, Lord Roden, and other noble Lords, from Bridgewater, Lothian, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Huntingdonshire, Kent, Wigan, Hereford, Essex, and other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Melbourne, and the Marquess of Westminster, from Dundee, Paisley, and other places, for Free Trade.—By Earl Fitzwilliam, from Bridgewater, Lothian, Farringdon Ward, and a great many other places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

CORN-LAW PETITIONS.—LINCOLNSHIRE MEETING.] Lord Willoughby D'Eresby presented many petitions from places in Lincolnshire against any alteration of the Corn-laws. The noble Lord made a few observations the purport of which was understood to be to deprecate discussions on presenting petitions, and to express a hope that his noble Friend (Earl Fitzwilliam) would keep his word, and not detain their Lordships by remarks on the present occasion.

Earl Fitzwilliam said, he had undoubtedly told his noble Friend, that he should not raise any discussion on this subject on the presentation of petitions; but as his noble Friend had presented a great number of petitions, from parts of the country with which both the noble Lord and himself were much connected, he knew not of any more favourable or convenient opportunity for directing attention to one or two points of recent occurrence, touching upon this important question. He knew how very offensive he made himself to their Lordships by such discourses, but he felt obliged to trespass upon their attention at the present moment, in consequence of a letter which had appeared in a newspaper published in the county with which he was connected. He alluded to the letter addressed to the chairman of a meeting recently held in that county by a noble Lord who now sat on the cross-benches (Lord Willoughby D'Eresby). With respect to this letter he must say, that if the apprehensions expressed by the noble Lord in his letter be true, undoubtedly the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government on the subject of the Corn-laws would inflict great evils upon the country. But he would beg of their Lordships to consider whether there were any the slightest grounds for such apprehensions. So far from believing that there were, he (Earl Fitzwilliam) thought that to entertain

such apprehensions evidenced such a prostration of understanding as he had never before witnessed. The noble Lord in the letter to which he alluded, stated, that the introduction of foreign corn at a fixed duty of 8s. per quarter would have the effect of sweeping away one-third of the rentals of the country. He (Earl Fitzwilliam) believed that it would have no such effect; but if any of their Lordships thought it would have such effect, he thought that that circumstance would disentitle him to the reproach which he received the other evening for having accused some parts of the Legislature of acting from interested motives on this question; for undoubtedly if this apprehension were correct, that the proposed measure would sweep away one-third of the rentals of the country, it would follow that the reason of many of the opponents of that measure was to keep up their own rentals. Then what other ground could they have to support these laws? [The Earl of Winchilsea: The employment of the labourers.] The employment of the labourers! Why, now, did the noble Earl really believe that the effect of this measure would be to throw out of cultivation one-third of the land of this country? If so the noble Earl could really have no knowledge either of agriculture or commerce? In what part of the country was this to happen? [The Earl of Winchilsea: In the county of Lincolnshire itself to a great extent.] The noble Earl certainly knew more of the county of Lincoln than he did himself; but, at the same time, he had been a good deal in that part of the country, and he defied any one to point out a thousand acres in that county which would be thrown out of cultivation by this measure. Would it be in the fens, or the rich lands of the north, or on Lincoln Heath? He happened to be the owner and cultivator of some lands of the very description which were upon Lincoln Heath, and he was bound to say, that upon these lands this measure would not have the effect predicted. It might lead to a trifling reduction of rents there, but it was altogether monstrous and extravagant to say, that it would throw those lands out of cultivation. But here again he would refer to the noble Lord's letter; the noble Lord said, that the deficiency of the tenant would be made up by a reduction of rent on the part of the landlord.

This made out what he had always maintained, that this was a landlord's question and not a tenant's. But the noble Lord went on to say, that one-third of the agricultural capital would be lost. Why, what did the noble Lord mean by this? Did he mean that the farmers would lose every third waggon, or every third plough, or every third pair of harrows. No; he could not mean that. Did he mean, then, that the farmers stock would be of less value? If so, the only result would be, that men of less capital would be able to cultivate land than at present; and that, he thought would be no evil to the people of England, but rather the reverse. He did not, however, admit the accuracy of the noble Lord's statement; but, even admitting it to be true, still its tendency would be as he had said. With respect to wages also, it was equally extravagant to suppose that one-third of the wages would be lost to the labourer. The average price of wheat for the years 1839 and 1840 was about 70s. per quarter. The average price of the eighteen preceding years—namely, from 1821 to 1838, was 56s. 8d. Now, he did not think that any one in the possession of reason would pretend to say, that a reduction of the average price of corn from 70s. to 56s. 8d. would lead to a reduction of one-third in wages or anything like it. The fact was, that wages did not vary with the prices of provisions. It was quite a mistake to suppose they did. Mr. Burke did not fall into this mistake, but on the contrary, on one occasion remarked, that the Norfolk squires, who had stated, that wages varied with the prices of provisions, "must have dined when they said so." For his part, he believed the fact to be rather the other way; and that a temporary rise in the prices of provisions, by causing an increased pressure and urgency to seek employment amongst the working classes, must lead to a depreciation of wages. He knew that the temporary distress of labourers in times of urgency was often met and provided for by the kindness and consideration of individuals; but this was not a sufficient means to counteract the effect of a bad state of the law. He would beg to read to their Lordships some statements bearing upon this point, made by an assistant Poor-law commissioner acting in the counties of Oxford, Berkshire, and part of Buckinghamshire. This gentleman stated

that, during the late high prices in 1839 and 1840, wages, in some places, rose from 8s. to 10s. a week; in others, they increased 1s. a week; but that no increase took place in the district bordering on Buckinghamshire. So much with respect to agricultural districts. In the manufacturing districts the fact was too well ascertained, that a rise in the price of provisions produced a fall rather than an increase in wages. He must now beg to refer to a speech which was made at the meeting which he had already mentioned, by a Gentleman who was once a most respectable Member of the other House of Parliament. This gentleman said—

“What could the farmer hope to do against foreign competition, when he learned that foreign corn was now arriving here at 26s. a quarter, and that it was proposed to introduce it at a duty of 8s. per quarter, making a total of 34s. per quarter in the English market?”

Such were the delusions which men in high stations sometimes sought to practise upon their dependents. The same gentleman in the speech he was quoting then went on to say what was very true, that the average price of corn at Hamburg was 36s. 6d. a quarter, and that the prices at Dantzic were from 35s. 9d. to 41s., and yet in the face of these statements, the same gentleman made the extraordinary assertion that corn could be introduced at 34s. per quarter, after paying a duty of 8s. Why, there never was a more monstrous proposition propounded before an assembled multitude. With respect to what would be the effect of the Ministerial proposition, he certainly hoped it would lead to a reduction in the average of prices to something like what it was in the eighteen years preceding the late high prices; but that it would bring prices lower than that, was a proposition which he was confident no man would be able to make out. He thought it his duty to make these observations when he saw statements going abroad so calculated, in his opinion, to deceive, though doubtless unintentionally so, the labouring classes of this country.

Lord Willoughby D'Eresby thought that the noble Earl might have spared his remarks until the presentation of the petition agreed to at the meeting to which he had so pointedly alluded. It was not his intention at that moment, to enter into the question of the Corn-laws. He might, however, state, as wages had been alluded

to, that the rise had been more general than the noble Earl seemed to suppose. He must moreover remark, that the labourers themselves in his neighbourhood were consulted as to the scale of remuneration that would satisfy them. He employed 180 agricultural labourers himself, and he must therefore, know their habits and feelings. It had been said, that what he had brought forward did not bear on the question; but what he had brought forward he could substantiate. The letter which he had written was sent as an apology for his non-attendance at the meeting, and he had never for a moment thought that it would be brought before the attention of their Lordships; but every position laid down in that letter he was prepared to defend at the proper time.

Earl Fitzwilliam said, that what he had always said was that he believed the consideration of the farmers and the good nature of individuals had met the necessities of the case; but the fact was, that the good nature of individuals was not the rule which governed the rate of wages.

Lord Willoughby D'Eresby said, that the rate of wages which he gave was the rate of wages of the whole county of Lincoln, and not merely of his neighbourhood.

The Earl of Winchelsea said, that though he agreed in the opinion which he believed was entertained by a majority of their Lordships, that it was exceedingly inconvenient to bring under discussion this most important question—not only as affecting the agricultural interests of this country, but every other interest—on a mere petition, yet he could not on the present occasion, refrain from offering a few observations to the attention of their Lordships, though he had not hitherto done so on presenting the numerous petitions which he had had the honour of laying on their Lordships' Table. In the first place, he did think that the noble Earl, acquainted, as he must have been, with the character of the respected country gentleman to whom he had alluded, and who once had the honour of representing the county of Lincoln, might have treated him with more courtesy. He had stood by his side at a meeting on Friday last, in another part of the country, and he must say, that of all the public meetings he (the Earl of Winchelsea) had ever attended, he had never seen such a devoted feeling of attachment towards any

man as was shown towards that gentleman; and when the noble Earl came forward and accused that gentleman of false statements to his peasantry, he, as a neighbour of that gentleman, rejected the charge with indignation. [Earl Fitzwilliam.—I never made it.] The charge is false; he never did any such thing. He would go with him to this extent in opinion, that if foreign corn could be bonded at 26s. a quarter, it would come out, at a fixed duty of 8s., at 34s. a quarter, which was a price against which no English farmer could compete. He held the opinion, that the present system of Corn-laws was the best that ever was proposed, and, that on an average of years it had worked well. The labouring population with the present Corn-law had had their corn at a fair price; but with a fixed duty it would be double the price in a few years. If they depended on foreign supply, English capital would go to aid it; for English capital would always flow where there was the greatest remuneration; and if this free trade in corn were opened, thousands of acres would be immediately brought into cultivation, and the produce of those countries whence corn was supplied would be a thousand times more than it at present was, which must tend still further to reduce the price at which foreign corn could be introduced. The noble Earl had stated, that the price of wages did not depend on the price of corn. He himself was a practical agriculturist. He was not possessed of the princely fortune of the noble Earl, but he had sufficient estates to enable him to form a practical opinion on the matter. He was his own steward on his property. He had no intermediate man between him and his tenants. He let his own land and made his own agreements, and he was, practically, as well acquainted with all the bearings of the agricultural interest as any landholder in that House. He had estates in Kent, in Sussex, in Lincolnshire, and in Hampshire, and in all those counties he found the rate of wages invariably affected by the price of corn. The rate of wages during the winter months in each of those districts had been from 13s. 6d. to 15s. a week. When corn was low, the present corn-law was no protection at all to the agricultural interests of this country; and when it was high from scarcity, the landed interest ought to be protected and have a fair remuneration. In the manufacturing district, wages were not affected in an

equal degree by prices; but he would say this, that they (the agricultural landowners) had a fair share of the burdens of the country to bear with the labourers, and they made those advances which prices would afford to the labourers to enable them to live as well as themselves. If the manufacturers would do the same, he firmly believed, that there would not be that distress amongst the manufacturing population which at present existed, and the factory system would not cause so much evil as it did. But now, when manufacturing labourers got to the age of thirty or forty, they were thrown out of employment, in order that women and children might be employed at lower rates of wages; and, debilitated, crippled, and demoralized, they were unfit to fall back on any agricultural employment, and were driven to live on the miserable pittance they could earn by the hand-loom, from which they could not derive more than from 4s. to 6s.; and at the very most, 6s. 8d. per week. He hoped, that some mode would be devised to prevent this growing and increasing evil. The noble Earl had said, that no lands would go out of cultivation in Lincolnshire. Now, there were tracts of land in Lincolnshire not worth more than 2s. 6d. an acre, which were kept in cultivation by artificial means, by laying on quantities of bone-dust and oil-cake, and if corn came down to the price at which foreign corn might be admitted with the proposed fixed duty, these tracts must immediately be thrown out of cultivation. There were similar tracts of land in Norfolk and other places; and in Kent, he knew land where the landlords offered it free of rent if the tenants would keep it in cultivation, and it depended much on a good seed time whether that land would pay or not. The great national burdens were thrown on the land, and why should there be this outcry against the landed interest? They would not allow cheap shoes or cheap hats, or cheap silks to come into the market, and he thought, that the landed interest ought at least to be protected. This proposed fixed duty was a mere delusion. This country, as far as possible, should be independent of a foreign supply of corn. If ever the day came when England was dependent on a foreign supply, and corn was made an article of revenue, did they not think, that other countries would follow our example, and say, "If you take 8s. a quarter on

our corn for revenue, we will take 20s.?" They would then have thousands of acres thrown out of cultivation, and, with a starving population, have the corn they must, at whatever price. They might depend upon it, that the manufacturing population would be as deeply affected by the change as the agricultural, for in 1832, when corn was low, they were starving, and praying for higher wages.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said the noble Earl had said, that he had made a false charge, which was rather a serious statement to make. He had not made a false charge. He had as great a respect for Mr. Chaplin as the noble Earl himself: but he believed Mr. Chaplin misunderstood this subject. He had never used any other term, and the noble Earl opposite was under as great a misapprehension.

Lord *Redesdale* said, what the noble Earl had said was—he quoted his words—"This is the manner in which Gentlemen in high station seek to practise delusions on the people on this subject." This he (Lord *Redesdale*) did consider to be a charge against Mr. Chaplin, and, like much of the rest of the noble Earl's speech, he could not admire either the argument or the taste of it. The noble Earl did not treat this subject as affecting a great interest, and the agricultural interest was the greatest in England. He did not conceive that the proposed measure would do much hurt, because a farmer might stock his farm for one-third less money than he now could in consequence. The noble Earl did not think there would be such a reduction, but he saw no great harm if there was. According to the same mode of argument the noble Earl did not see any great harm if any great manufacturer could come into the market and buy for 100,000*l.* an estate which was worth 150,000*l.* He believed, that the manufacturers would be glad to do it. Their object was, where they had mortgages on estates, to get them into their possession at less than their value. If the noble Earl argued the question on these grounds he would find, that the agricultural interests were all identified, and that the landowner, the farmer, and the labourer, would, all alike, feel the reduction.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* understood the noble Baron to say that "the object of the wealthy manufacturers in calling for the repeal of the Corn-laws was, that they might obtain landed estates on which they

might have mortgages." The noble Baron had made some observations on the "taste" of his speech; he should be very sorry to make the same observation on the noble Lord's speech which the noble Lord had made on his.

The Earl of *Hardwicks* did not concur in what had been said about the manufacturer. But from what did such an observation arise? From the noble Earl's persevering in arraying the manufacturer against the agriculturist. He raised men's feelings and passions on a subject of vital interest, and then he was astonished that they could in any degree seem to be violent in expression. Nobody could deplore it more than he did. Did the noble Lord do nothing of the sort? Did he not come into that House and tell them that rents were too high? Did he forget, that that House was the smallest portion of the agricultural interest, and that, although in ancient times the land had generally been held by Peers, the Commons of England, the poor and small freeholder now held the greatest portion of it? And him they were called on now to protect. But the noble Lord talked of their rents, as if they were the only persons that held lands. They did not think more of their rents, than they thought of the rents of other smaller landholders. The noble Lord talked to them as if they wished to pander to the appetites and pleasures of the landowners. But was not the agricultural interest the staple of the nation? If they were in distress, whom were they to tax? If they were invaded, whom were they to look to, to fight the battle of the country, but to the landed interest? It had always borne the brunt, and it was ready to do it again. Let them tax them, but not destroy them. They were ready to be taxed, if necessary, and to bear large burdens for the support of the country at large; but let them not destroy that interest which was to bear them. The noble Lord was always talking to the people outside. Why did he not give them notice of a day for a general debate? He had given them a notice the other day, but he had flinched from it; he had been choked off; he had been stopped. Now, he came forward with incidental statements, on which he was prepared before he came to that House, and which statements were made merely for the reporters of the newspapers, and did not tend in any manner to illustrate



the subject as a matter of serious and important debate. He was quite sure, that it was impossible for their Lordships to look at the state of this country as it now was in its peaceful and flourishing condition, without being satisfied, that the laws of this country must not only be wise in themselves, but ably executed; but there was not any law equal to that which regulated the mode in which food was supplied. Neighbouring nations were astonished, that the civil magistrate and the constable with nothing but his staff, could keep this great country in order without having to resort to the military force. We knew nothing of a standing army in this country. We were not obliged to call out 50,000 soldiers because a public meeting was got up in this city. But that might be seen in other countries, where freedom of trade was much talked of. They were not, therefore, to be frightened out of their senses by statements, and clap-trap statements, too, made for the purpose of exciting the poor —, but he would not use the term; he had almost given utterance to a word which, in the excitement of debate, might be, perhaps, used again. But the effect of these statements was to excite, out of doors, violent and passionate feelings amongst a class of people who were not deeply informed on these subjects.

The Earl of Radnor denied, that he and his Friends had caused any excitement on the subject. The noble Lords opposite complained of introducing the question of the Corn-laws this year in incidental discussions; but last year, when it came on in a regular debate, they grew tired, and began to cry out, "question." He, however, thought, that the discussion of this question, even incidentally, would be of great service, for it must repeatedly attract the attention of persons in, and of the people out of the House to the subject. When the noble Earl opposite, spoke of this as not being exclusively regarded by them as a question of rent, he (the Earl of Radnor) asked, were not all the arguments they had heard, brought forward in support of rent, and nothing else? Why that very evening, the noble Earl who spoke last, interrupted his (Earl Radnor's) noble Friend, and said, that the object of the landed proprietors in supporting the Corn-laws, was to prevent lands from being thrown out of cultivation—that meant, poor lands being thrown

out of cultivation, and what was that but an argument to keep up rents. [*Laughter.*] Noble Lords might laugh, but if they would reflect upon this subject, they would find that the amount of rent for each description of land was determined by the expense of cultivating the poorest soil—therefore the main desire of some of the noble Lords who were so anxious in support of the corn-laws, was not to keep poor lands in cultivation, but to keep up a higher standard of rent for every other kind. But they supported this object, not by arguments alone—they had brought in the statute-book to maintain their rents, as would be found on reference to the bounty they gave on grass lands, in addition to the protection to cultivated lands. Why, was there not a duty on the importation of horses? and was there not a duty on the importation of asses into this country. The acts of Parliament prohibited the importation of bulls, cows, horses, sheep, and swine; and what was that for if not for the encouragement of grass lands? They had a prohibition also on dead meat as well as live flesh, all for the encouragement of grass lands. What else was it for then? He next found the act of Parliament extending its prohibitions to turkeys, fowls, ducks, geese, and chickens. Now, what were all those taxes for, but to make grass, as well as arable lands, put money into the pockets of the landlords? Surely it was not, so far as grass lands were concerned, to keep up the amount of the wages of the labourer. Why no kind of food could be imported duty free. He would go farther, and say, that not only the produce of the land, but even the produce of the sea, was taxed for the landlords. There was not a kind of foreign fish that was not prohibited. He might be told, that the object of the duties on fish was, to protect our fishermen, and secure good seamen for the country. This was the origin of those duties no doubt; but why did we tax foreign salmon? This was a fish, at least, that did not require hardy and adventurous fishermen to catch it. The fact was, the salmon was taxed for the sole purpose of putting money into the pockets of the landlords—one of whom he knew to be realising an income of 4,000*l.* or 5,000*l.* a year by his monopoly as a salmon proprietor. Every kind of fish was taxed except one. Now you would suppose that this one was excepted for the sake of the poor man,

Not at all. This was a fish that had never been seen on a poor man's table since the world began, but which, however, was often seen on their Lordships' table—it was a turbot. He must indeed admit that there was one more fish which was also exempted—that was the lobster, for the sake of lobster sauce for the turbot. This was most true; and he thought it was also most discreditable to their Lordships, that thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow-countrymen were at this moment starving, principally through being compelled to submit to taxation, to raise the rent of noble Lords. He did not wish to address himself to the people out of doors, but he wished to address himself to the noble Earl who had just sat down, and to remind him and the whole of their Lordships, that while these duties were levied upon the necessities of life, as they came into this country, thousands upon thousands of industrious persons were at this moment in the utmost distress from the want of food, so that the pawnbrokers of Manchester and Birmingham were not able to comply with the demands for loans that were made upon them, by persons pressing for farther advances upon deposits. While this was the condition of so many thousands of our countrymen, was it not dreadful that every animal that walked the earth—nay, even that every fish that swam, and every bird that was fit for food, must be taxed, lest it should come in cheap for our starving population? This was most discreditable to their Lordships, he repeated, whether as legislators or as landlords. He believed that but very few of their Lordships had gone into the details he now brought before them—but having now heard them, they ought not to receive them with laughter and contempt. But these facts would be made known to the people of this country, who would regard them as quite the reverse of subjects of joke and laughter. We now heard again the old story put forward, that wages depended on the prices of food. Almost every word spoken by the noble Lord on the cross bench (Winchelsea) was in support of this doctrine; yet his observations would go to prove that this was not the case. For the noble Lord said he was the chairman of a board of guardians, and that when a pauper came before them for relief, they first asked him whether he had been in receipt of full wages. Now, if the wages were depending on the price

of corn, was it not evident that this question need not be asked? In fact, while the price of corn and bread was almost uniform throughout the country, the amount of wages differed very much—in Lincolnshire, it was 10s. a week; in Kent, it was 12s.; in the south of England, the wages averaged 9s.; in Dorsetshire, it was 7s.; in Devonshire, 6s.; in Somersetshire, 7s. These facts proved that the prices of labour did not depend on the price of bread or corn. In fact, labour, like everything else, was paid according to the proportion the supply bore to the demand; and wages were no more influenced by the price of corn than was the coat on the noble Earl's back. High prices for corn did not certainly produce high prices for labour. The fact was the other way, for as his noble Friend had stated, when corn was cheap, labour rose in consequence of the ease of the people. But he (Earl Radnor) would refer to an authority on this head, which their Lordships must respect as well as he did—the authority of the late Lord Mansfield. In the year 1814, the year before the present Corn Law Act passed, there was a committee of their Lordships' House, which minutely inquired into the relation between wages and prices of corn. Lord Mansfield, a member of the committee, who was connected with Scotland, sent down to that country for some evidence which was of great importance, because Scotland was not under the influence of the Poor-laws. Lord Mansfield sent down to his factor, a man in whom every confidence might be placed, for a return of the times when the wages of manufacturing labour were highest and lowest, and the times also when the prices of wheat were highest and lowest. The factor sent up a return, of which the following was an abstract:—

In 1805, the price of weaving a piece of calico was 9s.; in 1811, it was 3s.—Fiar's prices. This evidence, from Scotland, a country not influenced by the Poor-laws, be it remembered, proved that the prices of food did not regulate the wages of manufacturing labour, nor those of the agricultural labourer. The fact was, the wages were often highest when the prices of food were lowest, and lowest when the former were highest. He was not sure whether these were the prices of quarters or of bolls of corn, but they

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\* See Table next page.

would show equally well the relation between the prices of food and of labour. He hoped this table would induce noble Lords to examine the details of this most important question a little more carefully in future. He would now come to the repetition of the old story of making this country independent of foreign countries as regarded supplies of corn. Now if that was the object of the present act, was it not proved that that measure had entirely failed? Let us look at the returns of the last few years:—In 1838, 1839, and 1840, there were imported of foreign corn, for home consumption, no less than 6,235,000 quarters of wheat, which was equal to 1-6th of our whole consumption for that period. He trusted he had now shown their Lordships that this measure had been as fallacious in making us independent of foreign countries for supplies of corn, as it had been deceptive in every other point of view.

Lord Ashburton strongly condemned the time that had been chosen by the Government, supported by the noble Lords opposite, for stirring up the different classes of society in this country to regard each other as enemies, in consequence of the existence of the present corn and other protective laws. Whatever noble Lords opposite might think of such a state of things, he could assure them that it was a most dangerous one for the welfare of this country, considering what feelings had been excited in the West-India interests, the East-India interests, the shipping interests, and every other class of the community, by the measures her Majesty's Ministers had of late propounded. Nothing but the most urgent necessity could justify any Government for exciting the masses in such a perilous degree. The axiom of a great Whig Minister of the old time—probably the first

of his country and period for wisdom, and to whom history had done but tardy justice—Sir Robert Walpole—the axiom of that great statesman was *ne quieta movere*—but the reverse of this safe principle would seem to be acted upon by the noble Viscount at the head of the Government of the present day. The noble Viscount's object was to excite the greatest possible flame in the country. He (Lord Ashburton) would not impute the organisation of this perilous commotion that now raged in the public mind, to a desire on the part of her Majesty's Ministers to recover their lost position in both Houses of Parliament—that would not be fair in debate—but he would say, that a more mischievous course than the present had not been pursued by any former Government. He would now successively call the attention of the House to the points that had been dwelt upon by the noble Earl opposite. In the first place, the noble Earl mooted one of the most disputed points that had engaged the attention of political economists—that was, whether the prices of food did or did not act on the wages of labour, and if so, to what extent? He contended, that this was exactly one of those questions upon which the greatest anxiety now prevailed; and it was one which was made the subject of lectures and after-dinner discussions. But those persons who advocated the principle contended for by the noble Earls opposite, maintained that the price of food had no effect whatever on the prices of labour, or on the prices of manufactures; but the fact was quite the contrary. In what manner did the manufacturers of this country express themselves? They said, "we cannot compete, we cannot work in competition with foreign manufacturers, because they can work so cheap." But if the noble Earl was right, the ma-

YEAR.	WHEAT.	OATS.	OATMEAL.	MANUFACTURING LABOUR.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	
1805	29 10	17 6	19 10	Highest.
1811	41 3	21 3	24 3	Lowest.
1814*	34 5	20 0	21 0	Medium.
1800	57 3	35 6	43 10	Wages of ploughman, 12 <i>l.</i> to 13 <i>l.</i> ; of labourer, 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> a day in summer; 1 <i>s.</i> in winter.
1802	23 6	13 9	16 1	Wages of ploughman, 16 <i>l.</i> ; of labourer, 2 <i>s.</i> in summer; 1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> in winter.

\* Fiar's prices.

nufacturer in this country ought not to be affected by these changes. But he would ask, when was it—when was the period at which the prices of food had nothing to do with the price of labour? It would be a waste of their Lordships' time to argue this part of the case. Every person knew, who lived in the country, that the price of food had to do with the price of labour; and in truth that was the real theory to proceed upon. At the same time he did not deny that the price of labour was, as stated by the noble Earl, influenced by the demand and supply. They now saw this state of things produced in the West-India colonies, where the free labourer, for the pay he obtained for one day's work, was enabled to maintain himself for the remaining six days of the week. Such was the case, too, in the United States of America, and in Australia. But when a country became thickly populated, whether in agricultural or manufacturing districts, then the price of labour came down to that rate at which the poor labourer can be fed; the feeding of such poor labourers being determined by the proceedings of those who were entrusted with the management of union poor houses, and by the dietary system therein pursued. And let it be recollected that the manufacturers were running down the rate of wages as low as they could; they were advertising for people in all parts of the country, and the manufacturers could immediately bring in a mass of paupers for the purpose of working at the rate of wages prescribed. This was done every day ruthlessly, and without the slightest feeling for the condition of the poor and labouring classes. But the farmers, on the contrary, looked greatly to the good of the labourers, to the comfort of their own dwellings; and moreover they lived amongst the labouring people, for whom they entertained a regard and affection, without running down the scale of wages. He recollected that Mr. Huskisson had shown them cases of manufacturers advertising for workmen, and what was the consequence? Why, the moment the demand for the particular branch of manufacture ceased, or fell off, these same persons were thrown upon the agriculturists, and a large mass of Irish children were thrown upon the county, and subsequently thrown back on the shores of Ireland. He was far from wishing to impute any culpable intentions to noble Lords in

that House with respect to the arguments they held, but he must say, that most undoubtedly the language which had been held in reference to this subject was of a most inflammatory character. The most inflammatory language had been used abroad by those who universally took a one-sided view, in one way or other; they spoke always as they felt towards the manufacturers or the agriculturists. Now what was really the way to do good to the poor man? Why it was to foster and encourage all branches of industry; and the most desirable thing for the country was, to have all those branches in reasonable proportion the one to the other. Of this he was sure, that if those persons could obtain their object, who thought that good would result by throwing out of cultivation a large portion of lands, and throwing out of employment the cultivators of the soil, and thus raising a large mass of manufacturing population, this country would then be plunged into such an abyss of distress as no Government could comprehend, or effectually allay. But while on this subject, he would beg to quote from a work, written in the form of an essay, by Lord John Russell. He could assure their Lordships that it was a work which did the greatest credit to the understanding and character of that noble Lord. The publication contained sketches of life and character, and an essay on political economy (notwithstanding this subject had been so often and so well discussed), and the noble Lord came to this point, that the greatest distrust must be entertained of the champions of political economy from the fact that no man agreed on this most important subject, especially as to whether the price of food did not affect the price of labour. The noble Lord in this essay went on to say,—

“But the frequent occurrence of war, the complication of political interests, the existence of ancient treaties, and, above all, the establishments of capital and of people which have taken place on the faith of the continuance of old arrangements, often render a question of political economy much more difficult to solve than almost any problem in the range of mathematics. For instance, it is very easy to say that the trade in corn ought to be free, like any other trade, and that if your farmers cannot grow corn so cheap as the foreign farmers, they ought to let it alone. But when you are requested to consider that every other trade is restricted by duties, amounting in some cases to a prohibition—when you are told that millions of capital have been laid out

and many hundred thousands of people bred up and employed, on the presumption that the growth of corn would continue to be protected by law—when it is stated to you that the taxes are so heavy in this country and so light in other countries, that the effect of a free importation of corn would be the ruin of all the farmers, the conversion of the people entirely into manufacturers, and the consequent dependence of the whole nation on the commercial laws and even the caprices of foreign nations, you must own you have a knotty question to decide; and, besides all this, the question may be of such urgency, that I have seen several thousands of farmers utterly ruined, the manufacturers suffering for want of the internal trade, 200 banks broken, and money change its value, solely because a year was given to consider of the arguments of the political economists."

The noble Lord also said,

"It is very true that England would sell more cotton, if her manufacturers got cheap corn from Poland. But a Statesman is bound to think whether it would be better to have a million more people in the manufacturing towns, at the certainty of losing half a million of farmers and labourers; and he must place before his eyes the picture of that half-million starved out of existence, dragging along with them, for a time, the people employed in every branch of industry which depends upon their demand, clamorous for a pittance, which the inflexible spirit of science denies; shaking, perhaps, the pillars of the state, and menacing the whole order of society, before they suffer themselves to be extirpated by famine."

It was impossible for him (Lord Ashburton) to state more clearly and strongly the opinion he entertained of the consequences of great changes, than in the terms used by the noble Lord in his valuable essay. But another question which had been started by the noble Earl opposite was, whether any effect would be produced in respect to lands going out of cultivation; and the noble Earl denied, that any would be likely to go out of cultivation. Now, he had always understood the whole argument rested upon the unproductiveness of the soil of this country, by reason of the ungratefulness or uncongeniality of the soil for the culture of corn. There was a speculation that the land abroad was better worth cultivation, and, that under such a system, we should have the command of the foreign markets for our manufacturing produce. In the first place, it would be found, that parties abroad would not take our manufacturing produce. But we, in this case, put ourselves in this predicament, of putting out of cultivation all the

inferior soils, and of very largely decreasing the high state of culture of the remainder of the land. The landed proprietors must give up the expense of draining extensively, a system which had been going on for a long period; because it was quite clear, that the amount of expense could not keep pace with, or possibly stand in competition with the cheaper articles imported from countries abroad. Let them inquire into the state of those countries where the price of labour was half what it was here. If the prices of labour were not affected by the prices of food—if whether 8s., or 10s., or 12s. a week were the average rate of wages here, or the rate of wages where the people cultivated the soil in other countries was only 4d. a day, as in the case of Mecklenburg and North Germany—how was it possible that the farmer could cultivate the ground on equal terms? They must, then, come to some terms, to some arrangement with those countries; for the English Gentlemen of Nottingham, Sheffield, and all the great towns who did not like the dietaries of the poor-houses, must see that the farmers could not stand, unless they could find labourers on the low prices of foreign countries, at 4d. or 5d. a day. That was the state of things abroad. In point of fact, it was very much the custom here, and he was happy it was so, and hoped it would continue, for the country to be extremely anxious about the condition of the labouring classes; and, under the present law, they were in greater comfort than similar classes in any country on the Continent. In illustration of this fact, he might refer to the authority of Mr. Jacob, who was a political writer, and a gentleman who had been sent abroad by the Government for the purpose of examining into the price of corn, the state of agriculture, and the condition of the people of foreign countries. This gentleman declared, that he never saw white bread to the eastward of the Rhine, the bread was all black and sour, and made of rye. It might be said, that sour black bread was as good as white bread, but he believed, that noble Lords would have very great difficulty in persuading the unfortunate inmates of poor-houses, that black bread was as good as white. There was, too, the valuable report of Mr. Senior, on the hand-loom weavers, which contained much information. He knew, that during the short time he was a the Board of Trade, he made particular

inquiry into the condition and feeding of the crews of Russian and Prussian ships; and he found, that their food was of the lowest description. They were allowed hardly any meat of any kind. Then he said the people of this country must choose upon this subject. If they were so besotted and deluded, as to believe, that the removal of the Corn-laws would relieve them; if they were of opinion, that they should throw their markets open to competition and consumption abroad, they must live as the labourers abroad lived. He trusted, it might not be supposed, that he wished any such thing—far from it; for he believed, that notwithstanding all the difficulties which this country was said to be labouring under, and which never failed to exist in any country, she was going on prosperously, compared with other parts of the world. As a proof of that, he would state one or two facts in regard to the consumption in this country of articles something beyond the mere necessities of life. He would take the article of sugar—an article very unfavourable, as it was taxed enormously, and, moreover, from the condition of the West Indies, was at a very extravagant price. Now, it was stated by Dr. Bowring, a free trader, that the consumption of sugar in France was only on the average 4lb. per head, and in Germany only 3lb. per head; whilst in this country it was 17lb. He knew no circumstances, that more fully proved the general comfort of the great mass of people of this country than facts of that description. There was also another circumstance that might be considered as affording a still stronger proof. In a report laid before the French Chambers the other day by the French Minister of Commerce, M. Cunin Gridaine, it was stated, that the consumption of butcher's meat in France was only 46lb. per head, of which, indeed, only 28lb. was really butcher's meat, and the other 18lb. was pork, whilst in England the consumption was 134lb. per head. If then they found such a proportion in different countries as compared with this, and which as legislators they were bound to look at, they could not come to the conclusion that there was anything so radically wrong in the system and the law as to make it worth their while to overturn the condition of the country for the purpose of making some addition to the revenue. On the subject of meat, the French Minister also

stated another very remarkable fact, which was, that the ox in France weighed only from 4 to 6 cwt., but in England the same animal weighed 8 cwt., and he stated it as a lamentable circumstance as connected with the condition of the agricultural interests in France, and said it behoved them to see whether that could not be remedied. He said, also, that he believed one of the reasons why they did not roast and boil so much in that country was, that the meat would not enable them to do it. The noble Earl opposite said, that this was a landowner's case, and that the farmer had nothing to do with it. But in what did the prosperity of the farmer consist? in his stock; and he feared, that the farmer had not much more capital generally than his stock, and yet the noble Earl told them, that the stock of 1,500*l.* would come down to one of 1,000*l.*

Earl Fitzwilliam: I did not say that exactly; what I said was this—that if any person could stock for 1,000*l.* a farm which he now stocks for 1,500*l.*, I did not think there would be any harm in it.

Lord Ashburton continued.—But it was quite clear they must give up the present high state of cultivation, and that portions of land not fit for cultivation must be thrown out of cultivation. And when they talked of that, their Lordships should be aware, that when they went into any measure of that description they must begin with a change in other matters, as, for instance, the Tithe Commutation Act. He ventured to say, that land about him would not be cultivated to-morrow if such a measure were brought in, and, that when tithes remained in perpetuity they would have to avoid leases and be obliged to come at last to what used to be called an equitable adjustment (as we understood). Of that he was quite sure; but he objected to any measure that materially reduced the value of the produce of land. And the objection he had to that which was at present propounded, namely, a duty of 8*s.*, was, that it would be most oppressive on the poor man at certain periods, and would, at the same time, completely destroy the farmer in that on which he relied whenever corn was at any moderate price. The noble Earl opposite was fond of quoting the period when corn was at 39*s.*, which it was for a short period within the last six years; but the produce of the year was almost universally used within the year, so that, as a

question of rich and poor, the poor would have their bread heavily taxed when the price was high, and would get relief which they did not want when the price was low. There was not one of the high authorities on political subjects who had not uttered grave warnings as to the danger of adopting too hastily the abstract theories of political economy. They did not say, that those theories were always to be rejected and avoided; but one of the propositions for which they contended was, that though they were not at all times to be followed, yet they were entitled to this degree of respect—that those who departed from them ought to be called on to show the grounds of their departure. The authority of Mr. Huskisson had frequently been referred to upon occasions of this nature, and one observation of his appeared to be well worthy of the serious consideration of the House. Mr. Huskisson said:—

“First principles had been alluded to, but first principles, as well as other principles, must depend on positive circumstances and relative situations for the mode in which they were to be applied. If this were an untaxed country, if we had no poor-rates, if a perfect freedom of trade existed in every branch of commerce, the arguments of hon. Gentlemen would be irresistible.”

Those were the opinions of that eminent person, and when his authority was referred to, the House should not forget the passage to which he had just called their attention.

Petitions laid on the Table.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, May 24, 1841.

**MINUTAE.] Bills.** Read a first time:—*Militia Ballots Suspension; Clerks of the Peace; Lancaster Compensation; Houses of Industry (Ireland).*—Read a second time:—*Parish Constables.*—Read a third time:—*Vaccination.*

**Petitions presented.** By Mr. Leader, Mr. Wilbraham, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Easthope, and other hon. Members, from *Westminster, Loughborough, Sutton, Bridgewater, West Hackney, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-Laws.*—By Mr. Easthope, from a great many places, for the substitution of Affirmations, and against Church Extension.—By Lord Worsley, Lord Henniker, Colonel Verner, and others, from *Lincolnshire, Woodbridge, and other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.*—By Mr. Thornely, and Mr. Brotherton, from *Staffordshire, and Salford, for the Release of Mr. Baines, and the Abolition of Church Rates.*—By Mr. Elliot, Mr. Ewart, Mr. Wrightson, and others, from *Southwark, Galashiels, Warrington, and other places, in favour of the proposed Alteration in the Import Duties.*—By Mr. Gilson, from *Greenock, against any Alteration in the present system of Banking in Scotland.*

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**CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTRY.] Sir R. Peel** said, I rise to give notice that I shall on Thursday next move a resolution to the following effect:—

“That her Majesty’s Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through that House measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare, and that their continuance in office, under such circumstances, is at variance with the spirit of the constitution.”

**FOREIGN AFFAIRS—THE RIO PLATA —PERSIA.] Viscount Sandon** said, that the House and the country were aware of the inconvenience to which British trade had been subjected by the blockade which the French continued so long on the Rio Plata; but, perhaps, they were not aware that similar inconvenience, to almost as great an extent, existed in that region at the present moment, in consequence of a war which was being carried on between the republics of Buenos Ayres and Monte Video. He wished to know from the noble Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether there was any truth in the report which had appeared in the public papers, that an arrangement had been entered into between the British Government and that of France, in consequence of which the intervention of one of those two Governments would be interposed for the purpose of settling the disputes existing between Buenos Ayres and Monte Video, and restoring peace in that quarter?

**Viscount Palmerston** said, that no arrangement had been entered into between the British and French Governments of the nature of that to which the noble Lord had referred; but a short time back (about two or three months ago) the British Government received a communication from the government of Monte Video, requesting our good offices for the purpose of bringing about peace between Monte Video and Buenos Ayres. To that communication an answer had been returned, stating, that it would be exceedingly agreeable to her Majesty’s Government to be able to restore amicable relations between the two republics, and instructions had been sent to the British Minister at Buenos Ayres, directing him to offer the good offices of England to the government of that state; and if they should be accepted by both parties, to take immediate steps to carry that object into effect. He (Lord Palmerston)

hoped that the confidence which the government of Buenos Ayres showed in the British Government by accepting our good offices, when employed for the purpose of reconciling the differences which had exhibited themselves between that republic and France—on which occasion the efforts of our Government were greatly conducive to the good results which ultimately ensued—would now induce them to accept the offer made to them by us in the same conciliatory spirit as before. If such should be the case, he trusted that the two republics would come to a satisfactory arrangement, seeing that, in point of fact, there was not any material question between them—the dispute turning more upon a personal difference than any point of national interest.

Mr. Maclean wished to know something respecting our present relations with Persia. Our amicable relations with the Persian government had now been interrupted for three years. He wished to know whether we had received from the Persian government ample satisfaction for the insult which had been offered to our Ambassador, and whether the misunderstanding which had so long prevailed between this country and Persia was at an end? He wished further to know whether relations hostile to British interests did not at present subsist between (as we understood) the courts of Teheran and Herat?

Viscount Palmerston said, that the existing state of our relations with Persia were pretty nearly explained by the papers which he had some time ago laid upon the Table of the House. One point in dispute only remained between the two governments, and that was respecting the evacuation of the fortress of Gourian by the Persian forces. Since the date of the papers upon the Table, intelligence had been received that the Persian government had consented to evacuate the fortress, and a gentleman had been sent from the British mission, with orders to witness with his own eyes the evacuation of the fortress, and to report the fact to his government. The last advices, however, which had been received at the Foreign Office, stated, that some pause—some hesitation, had taken place on the part of the Persian government, with respect to the evacuation of the fortress, founded on a notion that government had chosen to take up, that the British Government was no longer anxious for the

evacuation of Gourian, in consequence of some difference which had arisen between the British resident there and the Governor. Instructions, however, had recently been sent to Colonel Shiel, directing him to inform the Persian government that that incident made no change in the policy of England, and that we still required the evacuation of the fortress. With respect to the latter point to which the hon. Member had adverted, nothing had taken place which involved the consequences to which he had adverted.

Mr. Maclean wished to know whether, if the fortress should be evacuated, that would be considered a sufficient compensation for the insults which Persia had offered to our ambassador?

Viscount Palmerston said, that we demanded from Persia, for the affront put upon our ambassador, a written apology. That apology had been received and laid before the House, and with it, he thought, we ought to be satisfied. Totally unconnected with that was the evacuation of the fortress of Gourian, which he held that Persia had no right to retain, and we had informed that Government that the British mission would not return to Teheran until the evacuation had taken place.

POOR LAW COMMISSION AND AMENDMENT ACT.] Captain Polhill said, he observed that there were upon the paper thirty-seven orders of the day, one of which was for the further consideration of the report of the Poor-law Amendment Bill. He wished to know whether the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, intended to proceed with that order that evening.

Lord J. Russell said, he would state his intentions on the subject when the House came to dispose of the orders of the day.

Mr. Walter said, he had not distinctly heard the noble Lord's answer. He hoped the noble Lord would be good enough to state on what day he meant to proceed with the Poor-law Amendment Bill.

Lord John Russell said, it was not his intention to proceed with that bill during the present Session of Parliament.

Poor-law Amendment Bill put off for three months.

CASE OF MR. M'LEOD.] Lord John Russell said, that he had, on a former night, in answer to a question put by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tam-



worth, stated that the case of Mr. M'Leod had been removed into the Federal Court. Upon that point he was mistaken. The case had been removed, not into the Federal Court, but into the Supreme Court of the State of New York, upon a writ of *habeas corpus*.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS, (ENGLAND.)] Mr. *H. Hind* asked, whether the Government intended to proceed with the Registration of Voters Bill (England ?)

Lord *J. Russell* said, they did not.

Bill put off for three months.

BRIBERY.] Sir *R. Peel* begged to ask the noble Lord whether he intended to bring in a bill for the prevention of bribery.

Lord *J. Russell* said, it was his intention to give notice of the introduction of a bill on that subject, and he hoped to have the support of the right hon. Baronet and the Gentlemen around him in carrying it through the House.

Sir *R. Peel* said, he had long since promised the noble Lord to support any measure having for its object the prevention of bribery.

SUGAR DUTIES—WAYS AND MEANS.] On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the House resolved itself into a committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Bernal in the chair.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the following resolution—

"That toward making good the Supply granted to her Majesty, the several duties on sugar and molasses now payable, or to be imposed by any act to be passed in the present Session of Parliament shall be further continued."

Sir *R. Peel* said, that he would second that motion. On Wednesday last the House came to a resolution declaring, "that this House is not prepared (especially with the present prospects of the supply of sugar from British possessions) to adopt the measure proposed by her Majesty's Government for the reduction of the duty on foreign sugars." The Chancellor of the Exchequer's present motion was in exact conformity with the resolution which the House had already agreed to, and he (Sir *R. Peel*) would certainly give it his entire support. If any person could suppose that, in consequence of what had recently passed, he entertained any desire to obstruct the public service

by throwing difficulties in the way of measures of this kind, he begged leave to state that no such considerations would influence him. The motion now submitted to the House by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in conformity with his opinions, and with those of the majority of the House of Commons; but, even if it were not so, he would infinitely rather take the sense of the House on a plain and direct motion of want of confidence, than upon a question connected with the public service, the adoption of which latter course might create doubts and hesitation amongst the commercial interests. He would therefore, not only support the right hon. Gentleman's proposition, but would abstain from submitting any motion for limiting the period for which the continuance of the sugar-duties were required.

Mr. *Hume* said, that the right hon. Baronet had thought proper to read the resolution to which the House had agreed last week. [Lord *J. Russell*—No, he did not.] Well, he read part of it, which declared that the House was unwilling to make any reduction in the sugar duties. He hoped the country would understand by that, the effect of the passage which the right hon. Baronet had read with so much good will, whilst he was triumphantly supported by the other side of the House, was to make every man in the country pay two-pence more a pound for his sugar than he ought to do. It was all very well for the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, to publish to the country that the effect of the alteration of the sugar-duties proposed by the Government, would be only to reduce the price of sugar the centesimal part of a farthing, whereas the effect of existing duties during last year was to make the consumer pay threepence a pound more than he ought to have paid for every pound of sugar. He was sorry to say, that from all he had heard, the price was not likely to be much reduced this year. If anything was calculated to make the people understand the benefit they were likely to derive from the right hon. Baronet's interference, it was the course which he had pursued with reference to this question. It was a matter which came home to the pockets of every man. Every man would have to thank the right hon. Baronet for making him pay 2d. or 3d. more than was necessary for his pound of sugar, in order that the difference

might go into the pockets of the West-India proprietors. He had not expected that the right hon. Baronet would have prided himself as he had done on the victory which he had gained. The right hon. Baronet supposed, that his victory was obtained over Ministers, but it was a victory against the public. It was a victory over the people of England. The right hon. Baronet said, in effect, to the people of this country, "I see you are distressed—I am aware of your unfortunate condition, but I will not consent to let you have cheap sugar." He hoped, that the right hon. Baronet would recommend his friends to read the paragraph which he himself had read to the House from the hustings at the approaching election. That would be saying to the people, "We feel for your wants, but we are determined to keep up the sugar monopoly. We are sorry for you, but this is a fit and proper opportunity for obtaining a temporary advantage over Ministers at your expense. Do not mind, however: we will do some good by-and-by, if you will only give us the opportunity." He hoped the people of England would have more common sense than to trust them. If the right hon. Baronet's conduct on this question was to be taken as an earnest of what he would do hereafter, it was clear, that he was opposed to all measures calculated to afford relief to the people. He really was surprised to see the right hon. Baronet in such good humour, and priding himself in reminding Members on his (Mr. Hume's) side of the House of the words of the resolution which he and his supporters had carried in spite of all the Ministerial forces which could be mustered. He admitted the fact, and he hoped the people of this country would be able to appreciate the part which the right hon. Baronet had acted upon that occasion—a part against the people at large.

Sir R. Peel said, this was his reward for supporting Ministers. Why the hon. Member for Kilkenny should feel it necessary to quarrel with him because he was in good humour he could by no means understand. Every one must see, that it would have been perfectly consistent with the views which he (Sir R. Peel) entertained, to oppose the motion which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had placed in the hands of the Chairman. He had already explained his reasons for not offering any

opposition to that motion—an opposition which would have been called factious. As the hon. Member had referred to the hustings he would put him in possession of the speech which he (Sir R. Peel) would read from them. It was a speech delivered in the House of Commons on the 9th of July, 1840. The right hon. Baronet then read the following extract:—

"SUGAR DUTIES.—Mr. Hume: I wish to know whether the right hon. President of the Board of Trade is aware that it is reported, that a quantity of sugar, the produce of slave-labour, has been imported into this country for home consumption, paying an enormous differential duty. It appears to me that, if this practice be allowed to prevail, the efforts of the House to exclude slave-grown sugar from this country will be rendered abortive.

"Mr. Labouchere: I believe it is correct that a small portion of foreign sugar has been admitted on the payment of the usual duty charged on that article. I cannot say whether the sugar was the produce of slave-labour or not."

Mr. Hume: I have no objection to the importation of sugar.

Sir R. Peel: Stop a minute.—

"But (the hon. Member continued) if we want any addition to the stock of sugar for home-consumption, I think we ought to take that in preference which is the produce of free labour."

Mr. Hume did not think that the right hon. Baronet could have been in the House on that occasion to which the extract he had read referred. The right hon. Gentleman should bear in mind, that a motion had been made in the House to admit foreign sugar at a reduced duty, for which he voted. The House rejected that motion; he was against the House, and on putting his question on the occasion referred to by the right hon. Baronet, he alluded to the opinion of the House as being against the introduction of sugar, and he said, that if the House continued of the same opinion, such and such consequences would ensue, sugar would be brought up to such a price that he would admit every kind and any kind of sugar that could be got. It was against the calamity which threatened and which did overtake the people of England that he was protesting. The right hon. Baronet thought he had obtained a triumph over him, whereas his allusion was to the House having voted against the very object he had in view, which was to admit sugar. He had no hesitation in saying, that hav-

ing joined the hon. Member for Wigan, in his unsuccessful motion, he was right in wishing to obtain all that could be got by taking foreign sugar, giving the preference, however, to free labour produce. There was no inconsistency, then, in his conduct. He was willing to admit all kinds of sugar in furtherance of the object which he had unsuccessfully attempted to attain. But he believed, that if that question had been attended to on that occasion, the people of England would have been saved a tax of upwards of 4,000,000*l.* sterling. He believed he had himself brought forward the question of East-Indian sugar at four different times, and he had always voted in support of the introduction of sugar at one common duty from every part of the world. His object was to cheapen every necessary of life against the particular protection of class interests to the taxation of the people, and he should be obliged if the right hon. Baronet could find a single exception to that general rule of his conduct.

Sir *De Lacy Evans* said, that as he understood it, the resolution before the House was for the continuance of the West-India monopoly; that being the case, the right hon. Baronet was not only entitled to second it, but he would be justified in telling the people from the hustings, that he had, or ought to have been, its proposer. The right hon. Baronet was at the head of a formidable body of supporters—of confederated monopolists—and he hoped, that the right hon. Baronet would, at the hustings, have the candour to inform the people, that the continuance of the sugar monopoly was chiefly owing to him.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he had contradicted the hon. Member for Kilkenny, when he stated, that the right hon. Baronet had read the resolution proposed on a former night by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool. His reason for offering that contradiction was, that the right hon. Baronet, in referring to the resolution, entirely left out the humanity part of it. Everybody knew, while the discussion was going on, that that part of the resolution was a mere pretext. Nobody but his right hon. and learned Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, believed, that anything serious was meant by it. The right hon. Baronet, therefore, in referring to the resolution, naturally enough, read only the essential part of it; namely, that

which was connected with the position of the Ministry, and left out all that was merely intended to catch the feeling against slavery; which, although it succeeded in the case of his right hon. and learned Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, had totally failed throughout the country. With respect to the present motion, it was as the hon. Gentleman had just said, a motion for the continuance of the sugar duties for the present year, including, of course, the prohibition, for he could call it nothing else, against the admission of foreign sugar. He could not avoid adverting for a moment to what he considered was a misrepresentation of what he had stated on the subject on a former occasion. What he had said was, that if the West-India planters could bring their sugar into this country, so that it could be sold at 6*l.*s., they would be no sufferers by the proposition. But he had also said, that if they should fail in their promise—and it was mere matter of calculation and assertion—then the people of this country would be taxed without the hope of a remedy. Those who quoted his speech had quoted the former part of his argument faithfully, but had left out the latter. If the calculation should turn out to be erroneous, there would be a tax of 2*d.* or 3*d.* a lb. on the price of sugar. What he desired, let the price of sugar be what it might, was to secure the people against the effects of monopoly.

Lord *Stanley*: It appeared extraordinary, during the whole of the eight nights' debate, that the noble Lord should never have thought fit to make the explanation just given. He must say, however, that the noble Lord did not appear to be quite so accurate in his recollection of what took place on that occasion as he usually was. The noble Lord was not answering any speech or argument when he made the statement alluded to. It was at the commencement of the debate when opening the plan of the Government, that the noble Lord, in stating what he apprehended would be the result of the Government measure, informed the House, that the average prices of Brazilian sugar had been from 21*s.* to 22*s.*, and that the addition of the duty would raise it to 57*s.* or 58*s.*; to which must be added 5 per cent. for the rise consequent upon the increased demand created by the reduction of duty, making the whole price about 60*s.* to 61*s.* Therefore, said the noble Lord (Lord John

Russell), after all, you have not so much to apprehend from the proposal, for it is not probable, that the price of sugar would fall below 60s. The noble Lord then went on to speak of the distress in Bolton, and assumed the relief, that would be afforded by the reduction of the sugar duties, bringing the article within the reach of those who were now unable to consume it. In answer to the noble Lord he put the noble Lord in this dilemma. If they were to believe the statement of the noble Lord, the Minister of the Crown, who had brought forward the proposition—and he recollected the circumstance, because he had said at the time, to his right hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, that the noble Lord was going through the same statement, and using the same figures, that were in his possession—if they were to believe the statement of the noble Lord, then, upon the noble Lord's own showing, the reduction held out was nothing at all, and that it would not amount to six-tenths of a farthing in the pound. That was the dilemma in which the noble Lord had placed himself; and it was not in answer to any statement made on that (the Opposition) side of the House.

*Lord J. Russell:* The noble Lord knows well that if I had attempted to speak again in the debate, it would—

*Lord Stanley:* You did speak in reply.

*Lord J. Russell:* After the amendment. The noble Lord said, that I was making my own calculation. I was proceeding on a statement that had been made in a petition or memorial, a petition upon which the House was called upon to act, and in that petition it was stated that the price was 61s.

*Mr. Wakley* said, the right hon. Baronet had taken great credit to himself for supporting her Majesty's Government, and seemed surprised that he had not received a larger amount of gratitude from (the Ministerial) side of the House. The right hon. Baronet said, that he had afforded to the Government his powerful support. Yes, he had a painful recollection that on a variety of occasions the right hon. Gentleman had done so, and that fact caused him to ask the plain and simple question, of what use it would be to this country that the resolution of which the right hon. Gentleman had given notice for Thursday should be carried—if the right hon. Gentleman was prepared

to pursue the same policy as the Government, with the single exception of that good part of it which they had lately developed. Under those circumstances, of what advantage to the country would it be, that the right hon. Baronet and his supporters should sit on (the Ministerial) side of the House? That question would be asked out of doors. John Bull, after all, was a sensible person, and he would naturally ask, of what use would it be to him that the right hon. Gentleman should sit on that side, if his measures were to be identical with the measures of the present administration? He considered that at last—and the present was a proper time to mention it—that at last a very serious conflict was commencing in the country. There never was a time when public opinion was more feverish and apprehensive with respect to results, than at the present moment. He for one was free to confess, that the present administration, in a number of instances, had not given satisfaction to the people, and that many of their measures had been objectionable in a public point of view. But why had that been so? Because they had assumed too much of a Tory character. That was the reason that the present administration had become so unpopular. And he would say, that until within the last few days, their unpopularity had been rapidly increasing. But now that they were proposing measures which, if carried, would produce a great amount of public good, what was the first effect? A violent, strenuous, and organised opposition from that party who were exclaiming—"Give us the reins of Government." He thought the party soliciting power had already taken a false step, and placed themselves in a false position, which they would rue in a short space of time. That was his prediction; it might not perhaps be verified, but he conscientiously believed it would. In that House, he scarcely knew whether there was or was not a Radical party; if there were such a party, it had no recognised leader—at least he knew not where to look for the person. If there had been, he thought that her Majesty might receive support from that not powerful but honest party. But there must be a change between the organised factions of Whig and Tory, and he trusted the good sense of the people of England would advance to the rescue. He had been told that the vote of the other night

was a vote of want of confidence in the Ministry; but he could not regard it in that light, and he conceived the construction to be an unfair one. He, for one, had looked at the measure simply with reference to its character, and the effect it was likely to produce upon the public; and he had supported it, because he believed it would be conducive to much public benefit. While he occupied a seat in that House he would take every resolution and motion upon its merits, and vote accordingly. It had been said, that the proposition was made to turn out the present Ministers. But for what purpose was that, if, in so doing, they were to help those who would support the same scheme of policy that the Government had advocated? It had been exclaimed, "Turn out the Poor-law Ministers!" Aye; but where were they to get Anti-poor-law Ministers? The noble Lord had said that night, that he did not intend to go on with the Poor-law Amendment Bill. He was delighted to hear it, and that declaration would be hailed with delight by hundreds and thousands of his fellow countrymen. Would the right hon. Baronet opposite bring forward a Poor-law Amendment Bill? He thought not: he hoped not. Still the right hon. Baronet had advocated that measure. The right hon. Baronet had said, that when in office he would take a careful review of the circumstances of the country, but was there anything to prevent the right hon. Baronet from doing that while out of office? The right hon. Baronet, while unencumbered by deputations, and business of every kind, would have a better opportunity than after he had accepted the seals of office. However, when the motion for Thursday came on, he really hoped that something tangible and explicit would be brought forward; for it was extraordinary, and without a parallel, that the party which the right hon. Gentleman led with so much ability, should expect to enter into power unpledged to any one measure for the public good—to any one measure in which the public felt an interest—to any one promise upon which the public could turn round and say, "You have not fulfilled your engagements." The right hon. Gentleman, it must be admitted, possessed great capacity, and was at the head of a great party in that House: the right hon. Gentleman commanded powers which caused him to be in the highest degree

capable of rendering services to this kingdom, and he would, therefore, entreat the right hon. Gentleman to take that careful review of which he had spoken, between that evening and next Thursday; and then let them know boldly and distinctly what it was they were to expect from him and his supporters, if they should come over to that side of the House. He could tell the right hon. Gentleman, that if he would promise more than the present Ministry, he, for one, would vote for him, and no one would give him a more cordial and hearty support. He was there to serve his constituents, and not himself, but nothing was more unsatisfactory than uncertainty. There was a little nursery verse, "Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what luck will send you." But that blindfold state would not do for the people. He was dissatisfied with the time when the proposal was brought forward, and he had expressed his feelings on the subject. He then thought that the great cause was perilled by the time the proposal was made. If, however, the Ministers were sincere, he was satisfied they would be upheld by the public, and they would be, and must be, triumphant. Belonging to the small section in that House, called Radicals, he would entreat the right hon. Baronet to exercise his enlarged faculties between that evening and Thursday, and try if he could not hold out something to the people more liberal than the proposal of her Majesty's Government. The right hon. Baronet shook his head, but if he could come forward with a comprehensive scheme of government, showing the expenditure of the country decreased, while its revenue would be increased, without adding to the burdens of the people, the right hon. Baronet would receive from the representatives of the people that support he would be entitled to receive—they sitting in that House, not the advocates of any party, but the great party of the people.

Lord John Russell said, it might seem rather out of order on his part, to answer any observations with regard to the postponement of the Poor-law Bill. He would however say, that in the present state of affairs in the House, while the questions relating to the budget, and other topics to which great interest was attached, were pending, he conceived, in the first place, that to have proceeded with that bill would have occasioned protracted discus-

sion, without producing a final result. In the next place, with the expectation that every Gentleman seemed to entertain, that he would have to account for his conduct on the hustings, there would have been many motions made, and many speeches delivered, which would have had reference rather to the hustings than to the bill before the House. If, however, the hon. Gentleman imagined that, in consequence of the postponement of that measure, he had at all altered his views with respect to the Poor-law, or with respect to any opinions he had given, in regard to particular parts of it, it would be better at once to state, that no such change had taken place. In postponing that bill, whether those on this side of the House form the Government, or whether other Gentlemen occupy these seats, he must say, the principles of the Poor-law Act were sound, and must recommend themselves to any Parliament of this country; and he believed that they would remain the principles upon which Poor-laws in this country would ever continue to be administered.

Mr. *Slaney* said, he believed the measures which were proposed by her Majesty's Government were necessary—Gentlemen should bear in mind the great changes which had taken place in the relative position of the agricultural and commercial population of the country. He thought that this alone was a reason why there should be a revision of the commercial code of the country. It was absolutely necessary for the welfare of the people, that the general principles of free trade should be cautiously examined, and carefully admitted. He took this opportunity of stating these opinions, as no opportunity was afforded him during the recent debate.

Sir *C. Grey* said, it was evident that the right hon. Baronet, by the motion he had announced, wished, if he could, to divert the public attention from principles to persons. He charged the right hon. Baronet with design to prevent the discussion of the great measures of public benefit which had been brought forward, and to hinder them from being so fully argued in that House, as that the people would be well informed on the merits of them before the appeal was made to their judgment in the usual form. He could construe in no other way the notice which the right hon. Baronet had interposed, so as to preclude the discussion on the most

important of the three measures, if his motion should be carried in the interval. Seeing that they were placed in this situation, he was desirous of recalling the views on which he had acted in this emergency, which he predicted the right hon. Baronet would find, before he escaped from it, to have been the most important that had arisen in the present century. He considered that the gauntlet had been thrown down by his side of the House on the principle of removing prohibitory duties on articles of foreign produce, and the right hon. Baronet if he had any pretensions to fill the highest place in the councils of the country, ought to have taken it up manfully. With respect to the grand measure of a modification of the Corn-laws, he up to the time when the plan of Ministers was announced had always opposed any motion for a change of those laws. He should have been opposed to it still, if brought forward as an insulated measure; he should always have opposed any party which offered a revocation of those laws, unless they had consented at the same time to act on the great principle of a remission of prohibitory duties on imports. He should then have considered the measure as an act of legislation directed against a particular class, which had a tendency to bring that class into distress; but the moment that he understood the principle of a general alleviation of duties on imports to be introduced, while care was taken, in abolishing prohibition, not at once to do away with protection, thus preventing that distress which might otherwise ensue from a too sudden change, he voted for acting on the same principle with respect to the Corn-laws. It was not his intention at present to enter further into the subject, except to advert to the line taken by the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire and some others in the late debate. They had discussed the matter as if the reduction of price on imported commodities were the sole advantage to be derived from the measures introduced by Government. He considered that as the least of the advantages that might fairly be expected from the adoption of the Ministerial scheme. The first and greatest benefit that would be derived from the abolition of prohibitory duties on imports from foreign countries—which, stated in other terms, was the opening of the great market of the United Kingdom

to the productions of the whole world, instead of confining it to those of our own colonies—was the calling into employment the whole mass of our unemployed manufacturing population. The increase of imports would tend to an increased demand for exports; it would prevent those distresses which the Poor-laws were framed to prevent; it would guard against the exigencies arising from the fluctuations in the manufacturing districts, in which thousands were reduced to idleness by a single stroke. The next reason he had for giving his cordial support to Ministers was, that he saw a fair prospect that by the simple reduction of duty, a certain increase of revenue, to the extent of 1,700,000*l.* might be calculated upon. He challenged the right hon. Baronet opposite to point out any less objectionable way in which the present deficiency could be made up. He trusted the right hon. Baronet had not given his notice of motion without making up his mind as to the proper mode of supplying the deficiency. He called on the House not to permit the subject to be brought to a close without taking care to place fully before the people of the country the benefits of opening their markets to foreign produce, and to discuss these important questions in all their bearings.

The resolution agreed to, and ordered to be reported.

House resumed.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.] On the Order of the Day for bringing up the report on the Administration of Justice bill (No. 1) being read,

Sir *E. Sugden* said, he had understood the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies to have promised that he would prepare a clause in the present bill to meet certain objections which he had in view. The clause in question did not go to the extent which he wished, and to which he understood the noble Lord gave his consent. The right hon. and learned Gentleman referred to the various acts of Parliament relating to the office of accountant-general, the business assigned to that officer, and the salary allotted to him, which had increased from a much lower sum to 4,000*l.* in the last year. By the bill now before the House, the business of the court would be increased, and it was impossible to foresee how far the income of the Accountant-general might be aug-

mented, unless limited to proper restraints. He saw nothing to prevent it from amounting to 7,000*l.* a-year, while he thought the present amount an ample remuneration for an officer whose business was no more arduous or responsible than the Accountant-general. The person holding that office, gave no security and was expressly exempted by Act of Parliament from pecuniary liability, and therefore no claim for a large remuneration could be based upon that ground. The proposition of the Government was, to let the Accountant-general take as much as he could get. He proposed, to add a proviso to the bill, that the Accountant-general should in each year, pay over to the suitors' fund any balance which might be received over 4,000*l.* The right hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving a proviso to the effect he had stated.

Mr. *Hume* took the opportunity of stating, that he thought the proposition of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir *E. Sugden*) of too liberal a character. He saw no reason why the Accountant-general should receive a larger amount of remuneration than the Masters in Chancery. The Masters in Chancery received a salary of 2,500*l.* a year; the Accountant-General ought not to receive more.

Report brought up, and Amendments agreed to.

Sir *E. Sugden* said, that the bill, as amended in Committee, had never been seen by him. The amendments were not yet printed. Owing to his necessary absence from the House during the time the bill was in Committee—an absence for which he would not apologise—he did not know what those amendments were. He therefore proposed that the noble Lord should forthwith reprint his bill, with the amendments made in the Committee.

The Attorney-General rose to offer a few words to the House, when

Sir *E. Sugden* moved, that the debate be adjourned.

The Attorney-General thought that an adjournment was quite unnecessary; and in reply to what the right hon. Baronet had said with regard to the want of responsibility on the part of the Accountant-general, he said it was true that that officer would not be bound by recalculation; but if there were any defalcation in the property under his control, there was no doubt of his liability to make it good.

Mr. Goulburn said, the best thing the House could do, under all the circumstances, was to postpone the discussion till a future day. It was desirable they should have the clauses before them in order to form a proper judgment upon them.

Lord J. Russell could not consent to the reduction proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, in the emoluments of the Accountant-general. He had no objection to the postponement of the discussion, if it could tend to any useful purpose; but he would remind the House that this functionary held his office for life, and could not be removed without some gross dereliction of duty on his part. They could not, therefore, propose, whatever the amount of his duties or responsibilities was, to make any large reduction in the sum he had hitherto received.

Mr. Hume was of opinion that if the noble Lord would not agree to limit the salary of the Accountant-general to 4,000*l.* a-year, the bill ought to be withdrawn. He could not agree to the Accountant-general receiving more than a Master in Chancery.

Mr. Lynch bore testimony to the qualifications necessary to fill the office of Accountant-general. He would not say that 4,000*l.* a-year was not sufficient, but if the business of the Court of Chancery was to be increased, he asked what right had the right hon. Gentleman to seek to curtail the emoluments of the office? They could not interfere with the vested rights of the possessor, without giving him some compensation; but when there was an increase of business, what better compensation could be given than an increased premium? No one could be more fitted to fill the office than the Gentleman now in possession of it.

Mr. Richards bore testimony to the laborious duties of the Accountant-general's office, even in the Exchequer, where the investments were only 3,000,000*l.*, whilst in the Court of Chancery, they amounted to 40,000,000*l.*

Mr. Aglionby thought that there should be some limit to the salary, but it was well worthy of consideration whether the present holder would not be entitled to compensation.

Further consideration of the bill postponed, and the amendments ordered to be printed.

VICTORIA PARK.] On the motion of Mr. E. J. Stanley, the report on the Victoria Park bill was brought up,

Mr. Hume expressed his satisfaction that Government had attended to the petitions addressed to them on this subject. They had acted liberally towards the north and east part of the metropolis, and he was now anxious that they should consider the situation of the south. Unless an opportunity were soon taken of securing some open place, such as that in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem Hospital, they would in a short time find it difficult to get any eligible spot.

Sir E. Knatchbull agreed in the observations of the hon. Member for Kilkenny, and was pleased with what had been already done with the consent of both sides of the House towards providing open places in the metropolis.

Mr. J. French observed that all advances were made to England, and very few to Ireland.

Mr. E. J. Stanley referred, in answer to the Dublin Wide streets bill, as a proof that, in the present Session, attention had been paid to the wants of Ireland.

Mr. Wakley did not wish to oppose a vote for the accommodation of the public; but it seemed to him irrational to lay out so much money on the eastern part of the metropolis, when there was so much land on the north of the city to which the people had a right, and to which they were still refused access. He wished the Secretary of the Treasury would state when the 288 acres closed up in the Regent's-park would be thrown open? He was quite sure that, while the public were kept out from so much ground to which they had a right, great dissatisfaction would be created by the outlay in the present instance. He was happy to hear the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir E. Knatchbull) make the declaration which had just fallen from him. The hon. Baronet was willing to give the people fresh air, and he reminded him that fresh air increased the appetite—and he hoped the hon. Baronet would recollect that on a future occasion—the people wanted bread.

Report received.

Bill to be read a third time on the following day.

COPYHOLD.] The report on the Copyhold and Customary Tenure bill was brought up,



Sir E. Sugden moved that the bill be re-committed.

Mr. Stewart opposed the motion.

Sir E. Sugden would not persist in his motion for the re-committal of the bill, but begged to move that the eighth clause, which threw the expense of the commutations on the Consolidated Fund, be left out of the bill.

The Attorney-general supported the clause.

Mr. Wakley would vote with the right hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for Ripon, for the omission of the eighth clause. He thought the expenses of the commutations ought not to be borne by the Consolidated Fund.

Sir E. Sugden would not divide the House on his motion at present, but would reserve to himself the right of bringing forward his objections on the third reading of the bill.

Bill to be read a third time on the following Thursday.

**BOROUGH IMPROVEMENT BILL.]** Mr. Fox Maule said, that the three bills—the Boroughs Improvement bill, the Drainage of Towns bill, and the Building Regulations bill had hitherto passed *sub silentio*, and he now moved the committal of the Boroughs Improvement bill *pro forma*, for the introduction of the necessary money clauses. He did so on the understanding that it would be competent for any hon. Member to move on a future occasion for the re-committal of the bill, for the purpose of its provisions being discussed.

Bill went through Committee *pro forma*. Report to be received.

**DRAINAGE OF TOWNS.]** On the order of the day for the second reading of the Drainage of Towns bill being read,

The Speaker said, that he had to inform the House that the effect of the bill would be to give to the commissioners of sewers additional powers to tax the people, and, that, therefore, it was not a bill which could properly originate with the House of Lords.

Mr. Fox Maule said, in that case he begged to give notice that he would to-morrow move for leave to bring in a bill of a similar character, and in the mean time he would move, that the present bill be read that day three months.

Agreed to.

The Buildings Regulation bill was also committed *pro forma*.

**ARMS (IRELAND).]** The Lords' amendments to the Arms (Ireland) bill were considered, and not being agreed to, on the motion of Mr. Pigot a conference was directed to be requested.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, May 25, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a first time:—Ecclesiastical and Spiritual Corporations; Ecclesiastical Benefices; Farming Leases.

Petitions presented. By Lord Redesdale, the Earl of Winchester, and the Duke of Wellington, from places in Suffolk, Walsley, and from places in Hampshire, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Rosebery, from Llanthony, and Stirling, for the Government measure for the Alteration of the Import Duties; and from the Members of the Scotch Church, Lancaster, against Lay Patronage (Scotland).

**CORN-LAWS — EXPLANATION.]** The Earl of Radnor said, that, seeing the noble Earl (the Earl of Ripon) opposite in his place, he wished to draw the attention of their Lordships to the paper respecting the official and declared value of the exports from which the noble Lord had last week quoted, for the purpose of showing that from 1830 to the present time, both the official and the declared value of the exports had gradually risen, and he had, indeed, stated, that during one year there had been a falling off, but that he had said was a matter that frequently occurred, but the noble Earl had omitted to draw their Lordships' attention to the last sum in the paper, and the impression left upon the House was, that the exports had been gradually increasing. Indeed, upon that impression the noble Earl had founded his argument, when he asked how could the manufacturers be in so distressed a state as they were represented to be. If the noble Earl had quoted the last sum, it would have appeared, that there was last year a considerable defalcation in the value of the exports. The noble Earl had quoted the official value of the last year, which showed an increase, but he had omitted to quote the declared value, which showed a considerable defalcation. The noble Lord had referred to the great falling off in the declared value, and had said, that in former years it amounted to

nearly eleven millions, and appealed to him (the Earl of Radnor) that so large a falling off was one which required something more in the way of explanation than the mere observation that such things were of common occurrence in commercial transactions. The noble Earl had stated, that the official value was nothing more than a declaration of the quantity of the article manufactured, while the declared value approximated to its real value; and if any noble Lord had looked at the returns, he would find a statement of the difference between the official and declared value, which would explain the matter. In the course of the last twelve years, the official value had gradually risen from fifty-six to one hundred and two millions, and, on the other hand, the real value had increased from thirty-five to only fifty-one millions. The necessary consequence of that was, that the real value of the article had been continually diminishing, because if it were otherwise, it would have gone on increasing in the same ratio as the official value. That was to be attributed to the pressure of the dear corn years; so that the manufacturer had not only to contend with the high price of corn, but in the falling off in the price of his own manufactures. He had received a letter from a gentleman in the country a day or two since, who stated, that in Manchester, Birmingham, and the other manufacturing districts, the state of distress was such, that pen could not write, tongue could not tell, nor the heart conceive it. Being on his legs, he could not help alluding to something that had occurred in the course of the debate last night. A noble Lord stated, that a great country, densely populated, should provide food for its own inhabitants. He would ask the noble Lord to name any great country which either in ancient or modern times had ever pretended to grow corn enough for the consumption of its own people. The republics of Greece he believed did not. Crete and Sicily were the granaries of Greece. Rome certainly did not. Sicily and Egypt were the granaries of Rome. This country was also an example of the same fact. The noble Lord had, the other evening, talked of our ancient corn-laws, and had quoted the laws against regrating and engroasing. Now the object of those laws was to do that which it was the duty of all Governments to do—to take care that the people should not be

starved. Parliament, during the last 150 years, had certainly endeavoured to make the country grow sufficient corn for its own consumption. That Parliament had been composed of landowners. It had been said they did not legislate for their own interests, but it did so happen that the sole object of their legislation had been to endeavour to force the country to grow corn sufficient for the consumption of the people. During the first half of the last century they had so far succeeded as to make this an exporting country, but during the last eighty years the attempt had failed; 1760 was the climax; from that time the export of corn gradually diminished until 1770, since which time this had been an importing country. Now, he should like to know whether the power and wealth of the country had been greatest when it was an importing or an exporting country? Undoubtedly since it had been an importing country. Every ten years since 1760 the importation of corn had gone on gradually increasing, with but one exception, under the act of 1815, but under the present law importation had greatly increased. Had our power diminished in consequence? Was it not notorious that an exporting country was always a poor country? Look at Ireland; that was an exporting country. The exports of corn from Ireland had recently diminished, and the prosperity of Ireland was increasing. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Ashburton) was a high authority, and deservedly so, and he recollected what a different view the noble Lord took of this question in 1815. The noble Lord then foretold with accuracy what the state of the country would be at the present time. The noble Lord said, that if they attempted by legislation to cut down the population to the amount of food that the country could produce, it would be like shortening the man for the bed, instead of lengthening the bed for the man. But that noble Lord seemed now to think that this country could grow sufficient food for its own consumption. All he could say was that they had been trying the experiment for eighty years, and had always failed. He heard a great deal of talk about artificial manure rendering the land sufficiently productive to raise food for the inhabitants; he heard of manure being brought from China, and a short time since he heard of two ship loads of birds dung coming from the western coast of South America,

Now, he must say, that if they could only raise sufficient food by such means as these, he entertained very little hope of their doing so. There was no instance in ancient or modern history, with the exception of Israel, and *exceptio probat regulam*, of a great country growing sufficient food for its own consumption. The noble Lord had made a statement with regard to the effect of the price of corn upon wages, and he had quoted a passage from Adam Smith. Now, he found, upon reference, that the effect of that passage was the very reverse of what had been stated.

Lord *Ashburton* said, the passage he had quoted, was from a pamphlet written by Lord J. Russell.

The Earl of *Radnor* begged the noble Lord's pardon.

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, it was irregular to refer to debates of a former evening.

Lord *Wharnccliffe* said, it was quite irregular to refer to speeches of a former night. The noble Earl had gone beyond all reason. He had gone last night through every speech made by his noble Friend during the last twenty years, and now he was going through those of the last four nights.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* said, that as a general rule, it was not usual to allude to speeches made on a former night, but that rule was systematically violated every day, and the speech of the noble Lord who had just sat down, in alluding to speeches made last night, was in itself a violation of the rule.

Lord *Wharnccliffe* said, that he had never seen the violation of the rule carried to such excess as it had been lately.

The Earl of *Radnor* would not press the matter. He must say he had heard from the other side of the House rules laid down for the conduct of that (the Ministerial) side of the House which rules had not been followed by the other side. A few nights ago, he was told, that it was against the rules to allude to papers without giving notice. [The Duke of *Wellington*: No, no!] He begged the noble Duke's pardon. The noble Earl behind him (the Earl of *Wicklow*) had said so, and the very next night the noble Earl committed the very breach of the rule to which he referred. As to rules of order, he very seldom saw any order in that House. A passage had been quoted, on

a former evening, from a pamphlet of Lord John Russell's, referring to Adam Smith; and the object of quoting the passage, was to show how much they ought to distrust political economists. Now, this appeared to him rather extraordinary, as the noble Lord who quoted the passage, did a few years ago compliment the Government upon their having established a professorship of political economy. The noble Lord had now turned over a new leaf, and ridiculed everything connected with political economy. With reference to wages, he would only add, that upon referring to the report of the commission appointed to inquire into the condition of the handloom weavers, he found it there stated, that although wages were occasionally affected by the price of corn, yet they did not fluctuate with the fluctuation in the price of corn, and a high price of corn was not accompanied by any sensible rise in the price of labour.

The Earl of *Ripon* said, that the noble Earl had forgotten or had misunderstood the whole purport of his argument. The noble Earl must have forgotten it, because the noble Earl supposed, that he had denied the existence of distress in the manufacturing districts, and because the noble Earl assumed, that he had omitted all reference to the declared value of our manufacturing exports of last year. He had never denied the existence of distress. He had understood it to have been stated, that there existed very great distress, and that that was attributed by those who complained of it, to the operation of the Corn-laws. It had been stated with great fairness and candour by a noble Earl opposite (Earl Fitzwilliam), that it would be most unreasonable and unphilosophical to ascribe any general state of distress to any one single cause, and that in considering that state of distress, it would be necessary to consider all the facts belonging to it. Now, the only inference he drew when he showed that there had been no such diminution of the export trade as was alleged, was not to prove, that no distress existed, but that there was a *prima facie* case of doubt with respect to the extent of that distress, so as to make any reasonable and prudent man pause before he came to a positive conclusion that the whole of the distress was to be charged upon the operation of the Corn-laws. The noble Earl had charged him with stating, that the declared and the official value of

our exports had increased in the same proportion. He had said nothing of the sort; it would be ridiculous in him to have said so; indeed, he had specifically mentioned, that the declared value was less than the official value. Now, with respect to the effect of the Corn-laws upon manufactures, it should be recollected, that there were many causes—such as the difference in price of the raw material, the substitution of the labour of women and children for that of adults, and the confused state of the currency—all of which might operate materially upon the condition of our manufactures, and the only inference he drew was, that it behoved noble Lords, who wished to introduce an enormous change, the consequences of which they could not foresee, to cautiously consider the operation of all those different causes, with respect to the value and extent of our manufactures, before they came down and invited the Legislature to produce a confusion in any particular branch of industry, the effect of which, it was impossible to foresee. The more he considered the question of corn-laws, the more he saw its infinite difficulty. When he proposed a law in 1815, he stated, that in his humble opinion, all the corn-laws were evils in themselves, that he had to make a choice of difficulties, and that the balance of difficulty lay on the side of no protection; and he therefore, with a good conscience, proposed the adoption of that measure; and although he had been accused often with having introduced a law for the purpose of fixing the price of wheat at 80s., on the one hand, grinding down the poor man, and, on the other, deceiving the farmer, he maintained that the tendency of that law had been to make the price of 80s. a maximum, and not the minimum price. And what had been the effect of that law? He found that upon an average of seven years, including the years 1816 and 1817, when we had the worst harvests that were ever known, the price was 69s. 11d. In 1822 the law was altered, and he concurred in the alteration, and 70s. was substituted for 80s. What was then the average price during the succeeding seven years? It was 58s. to 90s., and during the ensuing eleven years the price was 57s. 7d. This would show that his anticipations had been realised. He would only add, if he might introduce a subject so insignificant as anything that related to himself, that ever since the law of 1815

came into operation, he had acted, as far as regarded the land with which he was connected, upon the principle that the price of wheat could never reach 80s.

Lord *Ashburton* did not rise to go through his political life during the last twenty-six years, but he was taunted with having varied in his sentiments upon this question. He begged to say, that he recollected when the noble Earl opposite (Earl Fitzwilliam) was a most strenuous advocate for protection, and when he (Lord Ashburton) was in a minority of thirty-seven, in a very full House, in resisting an inordinate protection, and in opposition to the noble Earl. The opinions of the noble Viscount at the head of her Majesty's Government seemed also in the course of a very few weeks to have undergone a very great change. There was nothing in the statements of the noble Lord opposite to show that the existing law had operated disadvantageously. On the contrary, the distress in the manufacturing districts had been clearly shown to have arisen from other causes distinct from the corn-laws. With respect to the difference in the prices obtained for manufacturing produce at different times, he might refer, not to a speech delivered elsewhere, but to what would have been a speech, but which the House of Commons refused to hear—he meant a publication of Mr. Fielden's which was worthy of their Lordships' attention, as containing some very striking statements by a practical man. Mr. Fielden said, that the consumption of cotton in 1815, was 80,000,000lbs., and in 1820 it had risen to 120,000,000lbs., showing a great advance and increase in manufactures, but at the latter period the labourer was receiving from 25 to 51 per cent. more for the manufactured article than in 1815. In 1830 he was receiving 65 per cent. less. The consumption of cotton, however, had increased to 247,000,000lbs. In 1835 it was 318,000,000lbs., but the manufacturing operator was receiving 70 per cent. less in proportion to the article than in 1815. In 1840, the quantity of cotton worked up was 451,000,000lbs., but the labourer's remuneration was 75 per cent. proportionably less than in 1815. He spoke of the operatives. And if arguments drawn from statements like this proved anything, they proved that manufacturing prosperity led to the impoverishment of the operatives. The mere increase of manufactures did not tend to the well-

being of the operatives. If they were living in the times when the spindle was in every cottage there might appear a more general diffusion of prosperity through the working classes than was now perceived under the influence of large capitals, employing the people in factories. But he did not say this with a view of re-constructing or requiring any interference with the present state of things, which was quite out of the question, and would be perfectly absurd, but he made the observation in reference to the remarks which had fallen from noble Lords opposite. It was not true, as a noble Lord had intimated, that he (Lord Ashburton) advocated the absolute independence of this country with regard to its supplies. He only desired to pursue the principle as far as was reasonable and practicable, by giving fair encouragement to the home grower, not for his own benefit, but for the benefit of the mass of the community; and the practical effect had been good. There had not been in this country within the memory of any man living a period of what might be called very severe pressure with respect to the price of food. Compared with other nations England had been remarkably free from those seasons of extraordinary pressure which were inseparable from the condition of men. The authority of an Oxford Professor of Political Economy had been referred to, but with the greatest respect for such authority, he did not think it ought to have much practical weight. Political economy was a science which was far from being worked out. Some most important questions, such as those respecting currency, were in the greatest doubt; and while it was undoubtedly deserving of cultivation, and ought to be followed so long as any intellectual pursuits were cherished, its theories ought to be received by statesmen with the greatest caution. The study was very well at Oxford, but he did not wish to see the professor brought to Downing-street to govern us. He (Lord Ashburton) maintained the same principle on the subject of corn-laws which he did some time ago, when at a period of agricultural distress some agriculturists demanded the abolition of the warehousing system. He said, then, as he said now, that the laws of the country were not to be tumbled about on every occasion of temporary distress.

The Marquess of Lansdowne said, that the amount of manufactures exported was

far from being the only test of prosperity. It was an element to be considered, but by no means the most important. It was the nature of manufacturing capital that two-thirds consisted of machinery, and consequently of fixed capital which could not suddenly be withdrawn, however disadvantageous might be the trade in which it was embarked. An unfavourable turn in manufactures was first made palpable by a diminution in the value of mills, but long after this diminution of value appeared, the mills would continue to be worked, manufactures to be produced, and large exports to take place. Therefore, this appearance of business might be very fallacious, and it was necessary to take into account many other circumstances before coming to the conclusion that manufactures were in a flourishing condition. Another circumstance to be considered was the exportation of machinery to other parts of the world. It was a fact not to be overlooked or disregarded by any party, manufacturers or landowners, that during the last eight years the amount of machinery exported had constantly and systematically increased. During the last two or three years machinery had been exported to the value of 2,100,000*l.*; and if this export had not taken place the makers of this machinery would have exported themselves, and so have rendered foreign rivalry still more powerful and dangerous. With respect to the existing Corn-law, it was no reproach to those who had introduced it, to say that it had failed to produce the effect expected from it. Its object had been repeatedly stated to be to prevent fluctuations, but it could be shown that the price of grain had varied under its influence between 30 and 40 per cent., and during some years 40 to 50 per cent., a greater fluctuation than existed in any country which was without a system of Corn-laws. The effects of the scale of averages had been of the worst character. It had put what belonged to the province of the Legislature in the hands of other parties, and those parties the most interested and the least fit to be intrusted with the administration of the law, of which, contrary to the intention of Parliament they had continued to possess themselves. His noble Friend, the noble Earl opposite, could not deny that the last two years had given the most palpable evidence of the operation of the sliding scale. A fixed

duty had been called a delusion, but there never was a greater delusion than that of supposing that the sliding scale gave a steady protection to the agriculture of the country. He was aware, and he only stated what he knew could be proved, that parties in different parts of the country had agreed to cram the market with a particular kind of corn, on three or four market days preceding the striking of the averages. And this was done for the purpose of controlling and obstructing the act of the Legislature. The consequence was, that the averages suddenly rose to a price at which foreign corn could come in at a very low duty; and then one or two millions of quarters of corn were suddenly thrown in. The existing law was the lever with which these parties effected this operation, by which at a sacrifice of 30,000*l.* or 40,000*l.* they made 300,000*l.* or 400,000*l.* at the expense of the revenue. What was the consequence? This corn did not come in the regular course of trade, which would enable merchants, millers, and farmers to calculate upon it; but it was suddenly thrown in, and, consequently there was a necessity for its being paid for in money; and then, in addition to the evil to the farmer, if there was any evil to the farmer, the whole community was disturbed by a derangement of the currency, the export of the precious metals, and the disorder of the paper currency of the country. The introduction of foreign corn, which in the regular course of trade would have been perfectly innoxious, produced all these evils because it was sudden and unexpected. This had occurred in the autumn of 1839, and it was repeated in the autumn of 1840. Gentlemen who were known to be friends of the present Corn-laws, had come to the Board of Trade to ask to be saved from the operation of the law. The Board of Trade was bound to enforce the law, whatever their opinion might be of its merits, and they were enabled to show those parties that they could not stir in the business. Such an enormous influx of foreign corn, with the consequent influence on the currency, was a greater revolution—and a revolution affecting property more extensively than any that could be imagined from a change in the law. He thought the case was completely made out against the law. The fact he had referred to, made a case which the Government was bound to look into

with reference to the interests of the whole community. He said the interests of the whole community, because he would never consent to discuss the question with reference to the interest of this or that class, but with reference to all classes who had a common interest in the question. Last night the noble Lord opposite thought to make out a triumphant case of the superiority of the condition of the people of this country over that of the people of France, among other nations, by quoting from M. Cunin Gridaine, a statement how lean the French oxen were in comparison with the English oxen, the one, as he said, not being half so big as the other; but had it never occurred to the noble Lord, that these very lean oxen were the creatures of protection? That these very lean oxen were precisely the result of the protection which the French legislature had thought proper to extend to French graziers, the French graziers insisted upon it that all France must inevitably starve if it depended upon any other country for its supply of oxen? It was admitted that French oxen were, as the noble Lord said, lean, but the French graziers said, "Give us time, and we'll let you have such fine fat oxen some time or other, if you won't let any body else supply you but French graziers." Besides it would never do to allow fat German oxen to be admitted into France, lest, peradventure, the principles of some of the German illuminati might get in with them. From the leanness of French oxen might an illustration be drawn as to the effect of similar protection upon our agricultural produce. It was said, that it was impossible for a nation to get on without it extended protection to its various interests; yet, in Switzerland, where it had not been thought necessary to have a system of protection, every branch of industry was greatly improving, both in agriculture and manufactures, though there was no country in Europe which contained a larger proportion of poor land than there was in Switzerland. He did not mean that, while other interests were protected, agriculture should be deprived of protection, but he was fully persuaded, that not only the general prosperity of the country, but that of agriculture itself, would be promoted by the change now proposed. He himself was a considerable landowner; he depended, indeed, entirely on land, and the land he possessed was not free from

those incumbrances which it had been urged so materially aggravated the disadvantages under which the agricultural interest laboured; but, he would repeat, he was fully convinced, that not only he himself would not suffer, but rather benefit by the change, but he was convinced also, that the class to which he belonged would not suffer, but rather benefit by the change as a body. He was clearly of opinion, that that class would find its interests promoted by a change which tended to increase the commercial intercourse of this country with the rest of the world. Such a change as this could not but increase the prosperity of the class to which he belonged, a class which he ever hoped to see forming a prominent and distinguished class in the community. It was perfectly obvious that some alteration was required; he had seen in his own experience the failure of no fewer than three experiments founded on the principle which it was now proposed to abandon in favour of a moderate fixed duty.

The Duke of Wellington agreed with the noble Marquess that it would be most desirable to confine the discussion of this subject to the effect it would be likely to produce on the general prosperity of the country, and to avoid those irritating and exciting topics which were brought forward every night on the presentation of petitions, apparently merely for the purpose of still further exciting that state of hostility which it appeared to be the intention to excite on that subject throughout the country, and he hoped the noble Marquess would recollect the sentiments he had uttered that night, and discuss the subject not as it related to one class only, but to the whole country. With regard to the frauds in the averages, he hoped the noble Marquess would take care to provide some legislative remedy for those evils; whether the law remained as it was, or whether a fixed duty was to be substituted for it; for he understood that the fixed duty was to depend in some degree on the averages—that there was to be a sort of a sliding scale; and he hoped the noble Lord would take care not to leave a door open to the same frauds in his system as he had complained of in the present one. He had been in office under the former system, and he could assure the noble Lord, that there had been no want of frauds under that. Enormous fortunes had been made under

that system, and great frauds had been committed, and he was afraid that frauds would be practised under every system; but he had never heard of any frauds under the existing system except those mentioned by the noble Marquess. One argument against the present system was, the great fluctuation in price which it occasioned; but he could prove, that the fluctuations in price which it occasioned were not so great as in many parts of the world. The fluctuations had been greater in Holland than in this country, and in that country there was no duty. He held in his hand a return of the fluctuations in the price of corn from 1829 to 1838 in different places in Europe. In England the fluctuation had been 31s.; at Odessa and Memel 55s.; at Dantzic 54s.; at Amsterdam 48s.; and at Rotterdam 26s. Now the difference of price between Amsterdam and Rotterdam could be accounted for by the fact that Amsterdam was situated in a thickly-populated district, where there was a great demand, and Rotterdam is a district not so densely populated. Now in this country there was a greater demand for grain than in any other part of the world; the people would have the best grain for food, and considering the consumption of the country, he was prepared to contend that the fluctuation was not so great as it was in other countries, and that ground for alteration failed entirely. He thought the subject ought to be brought on for general discussion either in a committee of the whole House or on the second Reading of a bill, and he trusted the noble Marquess would prevail upon his noble Friends to abstain from those exciting topics, in which they were apt to indulge on the presentation of petitions. Allusion had been made to what had fallen from his noble Friend, relative to the increase in the imports on cotton. It had been said but small profits were made upon the manufacture of this immense quantity of produce, but that appeared to him to have no connection with the question of the Corn-laws. The fact was, the improvements in the machinery, and the introduction of steam had enabled the manufacturers to manufacture with very little cost. They did not make the profit now they did fifty years ago; but they still made profits, although those were diminished by competition—not by competition with the foreigner, but by competi-

tion at home. Other manufacturers, who were aware that profits were to be made, although not so large as formerly, entered the field, built new manufactories, established machinery, and thus introduced fresh competition. He believed that the lower class of manufacturers were suffering distress, and that their condition was well worthy the attention of Parliament. The noble Lord had alluded to Birmingham; now from the official returns, which showed an increase in the exports of hardware, he should consider that Birmingham, Sheffield, and other places interested in that trade were in a state of prosperity, and looking to the declared as well as the official value of exports generally, he was of opinion that the manufacturers had not yet reached such a state of depression as had been attempted to be represented.

Earl Fitzwilliam considered that the most valuable part of the very valuable speech of the noble Duke was that in which he recommended that the House should seriously consider the subject of the Corn-laws, either in Committee or otherwise. Now he (Earl Fitzwilliam) had three times endeavoured to induce their Lordships to adopt such a course, but without effect. With respect to the lean oxen in France, it should be recollected that not only did the protection of the lean ox prevent the introduction of the fat ox into France, but it also prevented the introduction of French manufactures into Germany; and that was his great objection to the Corn-laws, and to all prohibitory laws, that they interrupted the commerce between different countries. With regard to the table quoted by the noble Duke it was a table of medium prices, not of averages, for it was made out by the Consuls without any regard whatever to quantity. He thought the fixed duty proposed by the Government would give to the English agriculturist that to which he was fairly entitled, a preference over the foreigner in the English market, and would more than compensate him for all those burdens in the shape of local taxation, which were represented as pressing so heavily on the land, although he for one did not think the landowner was more burdened than any of the other classes. He believed that the sliding scale, as at present constituted, offered a very great temptation to fraud. The noble Earl concluded by presenting upwards of one hundred

petitions in favour of an alteration in the Corn-laws.

Petitions laid on the Table.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, May 26, 1841.

**MR. WILKINS.] Bills.** Read a first time:—School Sites; Drainage of Towns; Assessed Taxes Composition; Pervolous Suits.—Read a second time:—Militia Bachelors Suspension.—Read a third time:—Entails (Scotland); Victoria Park.

**Petitions presented.** By Mr. Plumptre, Mr. W. Patten, Colonel Lowther, and other hon. Members, from various places, against Alterations of the Corn-laws.—By Sir De Laey Evans, Mr. W. Evans, Mr. Easthope, and other hon. Members, from Wigton, Hackney, and various other places, for Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Greig, from Incorporations of Perth, to sanction the financial measures proposed by her Majesty's Ministers, for an Alteration in the Scotch Royal Burgh Municipal Bill; and from the Associate Congregation of Original Seceders in Perth, for the Abolition of Church Patronage in Scotland.—By Mr. Hume, Mr. Hodges, Mr. O'Connell, and Mr. T. Duncombe, from Tonbridge, Stockport, Newport, Malvern, Chorley, and an immense number of other places, for the Release of all persons confined for Political Offences.

**POLITICAL OFFENDERS.] Mr. T. Duncombe** said, as the principal object sought by the numerous petitions he had to present would be fully detailed in his address on the motion on the paper, he thought he would best consult the feeling of the House by merely asking the House to receive the petitions, and stating the numbers by which they were signed. The large petition was signed by rather more than 1,300,000 of the industrious classes. The others were signed by—from Manchester, 9,997; Newport, 5,300; Chorley, Stockton, Congleton, Gatehouse, Cardiff, Holt, Montrose, Newcastle, Dublin, Norfolk, Chester, Derby, Ripon, Northampton, and twenty-three places in the neighbourhood of London. These were signed by 48,884, making, in all, the signatures 1,348,848. The first prayer of these petitions was this:—

"Your petitioners therefore pray, that your hon. House will permit a humble address to her Majesty, praying that she may be graciously pleased to give immediate directions for the liberation of all prisoners now confined in the several gaols of Great Britain for political offences."

The second prayer was:—

"That your hon. House will be graciously pleased to present another humble address, praying that her Majesty will be graciously pleased to grant a free pardon to J. Frost, Z. Williams, and W. Jones, now suffering the penalties of expatriation in a penal settlement."



The third prayer was, that this House, having done these things, would adopt the principle of the Charter.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, he thought it would be but fair and satisfactory to that House and to the country, that the hon. Member who had presented these petitions should allow the prayer of the petition to be read to the House. He would, therefore move that that be done.

The Clerk read the prayer of the petition.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, he was entitled to ask why the prayer was not annexed to the petition, which was the usual mode, instead of having the prayer separate and distinct, as in the present instance.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* said, that if the hon. and gallant Member would take the trouble of unrolling the petition, he would find, that the prayer which had been read was a fac-simile of that attached to the petition. The petition which he (Mr. *T. Duncombe*) now presented came from the female operatives of England, Scotland, and Wales.

The *Speaker* said, that it was the larger petition of which the hon. and gallant Member wished to hear the prayer read.

Colonel *Sibthorp*: Certainly.

Sir *R. Peel* said, that he understood the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. *T. Duncombe*) had stated, that the prayer of the petition which he held in his hand was identical with that attached to the large petition on the Table, and there was, therefore, an opportunity of learning its substance; there would be, moreover, great difficulty in unrolling the latter petition on account of its great size. Under those circumstances, he trusted his hon. and gallant Friend would withdraw his motion.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, he had not the least wish to throw any obstruction in the way of the reception of the petition. On the contrary, he was always anxious that the petitions of all classes of the people should be duly considered by that House. He wished the prayer of the petition to be read, because it was important; but after what had been said, he would do as his right hon. Friend suggested, and would give the House no further trouble on the subject.

Lord *J. Russell* said, that the right hon. Baronet had suggested the best course to be pursued, and he was glad the hon. and gallant Member had acceded to it. It

was impossible not to see, that the hon. and gallant Member, besides wishing to hear the prayer of the petition, wished also to make a jest of it.

Colonel *Sibthorp* said, that he treated the noble Lord's admonition as he did the whole of his public conduct, with the most utter contempt.

Sir *R. Inglis* had reason to believe, that the hon. and gallant Member had abandoned the intention of pressing for the reading of the prayer of the petition before the right hon. Baronet (the Member for Tamworth) spoke. It certainly was irregular not to have the prayer of a petition exactly stated, and any Member of the House might require that to be done without intending to cast the slightest reflection on those who had signed it, or meaning to interpose the least impediment in the way of its reception.

Colonel *T. Wood* said, that whatever might have been the intention of the hon. and gallant Member for Lincoln, it was quite evident, that the presentation of such a petition afforded no subject of merriment to Ministers.

Petitions received.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* said, that the hon. and gallant Colonel had disavowed the intention of treating the petition with ridicule; but if the gallant Colonel had not done so, he would have said that he never saw a better imitation of an attempt to turn the petitions of the people into ridicule, and treat them with contempt. Whatever might be the fate of the motion with which he intended to conclude, he thought it would be admitted, that it would ill become him to present petitions signed by between 1,300,000 and 1,400,000 of the industrious classes, and to leave their allegations undiscussed and unheeded by those who called themselves the representatives of the people. For that reason, therefore, he would call the attention of the House to many, but not the whole of the contents of the petitions. He was well aware, he should be told that he was, on this occasion, trenching on the prerogative of the Crown; but there were cases in which the House of Commons had taken upon itself to advise the Crown as to the exercise of its prerogative. He could quote precedents on that point. He might remind the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, that in 1820 he moved an address to the Crown for the liberation of Sir *Manasseh Lopez*, It

who was then undergoing confinement pursuant to a sentence of the Court of King's Bench, for Bribery and corruption. On that occasion Mr. Wynn, who had always been considered a high authority, distinctly maintained, that the House of Commons had a right to advise the Crown respecting the exercise of its prerogative. That right hon. Gentleman said :—

"He felt, that it was extremely unpleasant to oppose a motion of this description, and to endeavour to thwart the disposition of lenity which the House might feel towards any particular offender. Every Gentleman must wish to show mercy and forbearance,, as far as justice would permit ; but the case in point was not one in which consistently with their duty, with the forms of Parliament, and with propriety they could interfere. Cases might exist, in which the House might in justice be called on to advise the Crown to interpose, and to exercise its prerogative of mercy, in the same way as they might offer advice with respect to any other prerogative ; for the House had a right to advise the Crown on matters connected with all its prerogatives."\*

That was the opinion given by Mr. Wynn, and although Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning opposed the motion on the part of the Government, the expression of feeling was so strong in favour of Sir M. Lopez, that notwithstanding the noble Lord withdrew his motion, the prisoner was soon after set at liberty, after he had undergone confinement for eight months out of two years to which he had been sentenced. If the Government of that day showed indulgence to Sir M. Lopez, who was convicted of what must be considered a great crime, the Government of the present day ought not to be less merciful towards the persons to whom his motion referred. His motion was confined to persons who were imprisoned for political offences in England and Wales. The prayers of the petitions went farther, but he stopped at that point. When he was applied to by the persons who wished him to bring the subject under the consideration of the House, he stated to them, that if he were to mix up the case of the political offenders with that of Frost, Williams, and Jones, and the Charter, it would greatly prejudice the former. He reminded them, that last Session, when an hon. Member moved, that a pardon should be granted to Frost, Williams, and Jones,

the motion was negatived by a large majority, only five Members, indeed, having voted for it. He, therefore, told them, that it was of no use to make a proposal of that kind. As to proposing the Charter to that House, he told them, that he himself had made motions of the mildest possible kind with regard to the franchise—all of which had been negatived by large majorities ; he wished he could say, that motions for the disfranchisement of electors had been rejected by majorities as large, but they unfortunately had not. In the observations he had to make, he should confine himself to the case of the home prisoners ; and upon that case he hoped the discussion would be taken. Many of the individuals now confined had suffered for more than twelve months the most rigorous treatment, and the petitioners, in contrasting the treatment those persons had received, with that of others, said, that when a Chartist was found guilty of attending an illegal meeting, there was no hope, or chance for escape. They stated they had seen a Peer of the realm acquitted, and, as they acknowledged, justly acquitted, by a jury of his peers, of a charge of felony, because the charge was so loosely brought, that it could not be sustained. One of the petitions complained of the sentences passed upon some of the Chartists contrasted with that passed upon Lord Waldegrave and Captain Duff. And here he begged to observe, that the fact of the name of Captain Duff being mentioned in the petition, appeared to have come to the knowledge of the friends and relatives of that gentleman, and within an hour he had received a memorandum from Captain Duff's connections, the contents of which he begged leave to read to the House :—

"May 25, 1841.

"Mr. William Duff was on the 3rd of this month sentenced by the Court of Queen's Bench to six months' imprisonment and a fine of 20*l.*, for the alleged offence of being a party to a brutal assault upon a policeman at Twickenham. His entire innocence of the grave part of the offence is now well known, but that innocence was not made manifest at his trial, from his unwillingness to expose others to punishment. Mr. Duff fully admits having been present in the first part of the disturbance ; he admits having assisted Lord Waldegrave when seized by the collar by a policeman ; but no violence of any kind was used on this occasion, either by him or any other of the party ; and who can doubt, that had the matter ended here, no legal proceedings would

\* Hansard, vol. ii., new series, p. 369.

ever have taken place? In the second disturbance, Mr. Duff took no part whatever. After the occurrence above detailed, he separated from the party, leaving them in Twickenham, and proceeded on foot, accompanied by a gentleman, whose name it is not necessary to mention, towards Strawberry hill. He was not aware, until overtaken by the rest of the party in the fly, a mile from the place where the assault was committed, that any further collision had taken place with the police; it was on this occasion that the policeman was hurt, and two gentlemen who have hitherto escaped even suspicion of the offence were the active parties in the assault. All the circumstances above detailed can be distinctly proved, and are undergoing investigation in the proper quarter."

Reverting now to the subject of his motion, he had to state to the House, that subsequent to the 1st of January, 1839, there were 444 persons convicted of political offences, 398 of whom had since been released, and one had died soon after his incarceration. At the present time, there were 33 remaining under punishment. What had given an impetus to the feeling of anxiety on behalf of those prisoners was, that those 398 persons who had been emancipated from prison, either by the expiration of their sentences or by the clemency of the Home Office, had stated to their friends the indignities and cruelties they had suffered when in confinement. It was natural, that those persons should make a great and determined effort to save their friends who remained in prison from a continuance of the same treatment themselves had experienced. What had been the treatment, that some of those who had been liberated had undergone? Some of them had been released in consequence chiefly of bad health, but he would ask whether it was right that political offenders merely should be kept in prison, to the deterioration of their constitutions? He would read to the House a letter he had received from a man of the name of Hoey, descriptive of the treatment he had received when confined in Wakefield Gaol:—

"Barnsley, May 20.

"Sir—I beg to inform you, that I am one of those individuals who have been liberated from Wakefield twelve months before the time which was two years. My release took place owing to an ulcer on my leg, brought on by cruel discipline and bad diet, and I am compelled to say, much to my sorrow, that I am an invalid the remaining part of my life; I never had an hour's ill health before. Our

discipline runs thus. In the summer season we had to rise at half-past five in the morning, go out into an open yard, there wash ourselves in a bucket of water, which was to serve perhaps fifty individuals, so you may judge what cleanliness there was for the last dabbler; towels, in like manner, which after the second or third individual using, was of no further use for comfort; breakfast was then served up, consisting of a quart of thin gruel, and half a pound of bread; dinner the same, supper the same, excepting that they limited the gruel to one pint at supper: Sundays and Wednesdays we got five ounces of beef, and half a pound of potatoes, and one pint of broth on Mondays and Thursdays. This was our diet. We had to work in the summer from six in the morning to six in the afternoon, under the silent system, treated with as much contumely as if we were common felons; and one grievance I have most particularly to complain of, that is, we could not answer to the necessities of nature without permission from the superintending officer; the mode of asking was by signal, that is, by putting on your cap in the summer, and taking it off in winter. I have sat in the utmost torment for three quarters of an hour, before I dare leave the place; for the least violation of the rules would deprive me of my miserable supper, and if repeated, send me to a solitary place of confinement. In the winter, we had to rise at half-past six, perform the same ablution in filthy water, and to work during the inclemency of the weather, frost or snow, sleet or rain, without any fire to comfort us in the room where we worked. This is but a very brief outline of the hardships we endured.

"I have the honour to be,

"Your obedient servant,

"PETER HOEY.

"T. S. Duncombe, Esq., M.P."

He would now read to the House a communication he had received from a person named Smith, who had been a prisoner for sedition:—

"Charles Street, Oxford Road, Manchester,

"May 21, 1841.

"Sir—I am requested to send you an account of my sufferings, which occurred during my sad imprisonment for sedition. I am at this moment in the height of agony, being afflicted with pain in my limbs. It is, therefore, next to impossible for me to give a detailed account at this time. However, I will attend to this matter as soon as I am able. I hope, Sir, this will suffice at present, when I inform you that during the term of my imprisonment, the surgeon of the prison prescribed for me, which I took, twenty-three bottles of medicine besides pills and powders. I had also one blister on my neck, eight plasters on the small of my back, four on my knees, one on my breast. My sentence was eighteen months' confine-

ment in Preston House of Correction, after which I was doomed to find bail to the merciful amount of 700*l*. Remember, Sir, this sentence was passed upon one who had been made a cripple in the cotton factories; yes, one who had been carried to the mill some hundreds of times, when unable to walk. Please, Sir, excuse me in saying no more at this time, as I am sorely in pain. Perhaps, you will acknowledge the receipt of this.

"I am your most obedient servant,

"GEORGE HENRY SMITH.

"To T. S. Duncombe, Esq., M.P."

Bail, it appeared, had been required in the case he had just read, to the amount of 700*l*. Was it possible, that such an amount of bail could have been required of a poor working man? Why, more would scarcely have been asked in the case of Sir Francis Burdett, or Mr. Hunt, or persons in that class, who had heretofore been confined for political offences. The next case to which he would call the attention of the House was one in which a man had died in prison, and was as follows:—

"Clayton, who died in prison, complained once of a pain in his back, and stated, that he considered it was occasioned by the hard labour of the mill. He attempted to say something further to induce the visiting surgeon to remove him, when the governor's son, who was the superintendent of the prison, would not allow him to proceed. He had been in solitary confinement on a charge of violating the silent system. He died about six weeks after his complaining. He pleaded guilty in consequence of a promise held out to him, that he would be let out on his recognizances, but was afterwards sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour."

There was also the case of a person named Lovell, now confined in the Penitentiary at Millbank, who stated he had been misled by the Chartist leaders. A petition in favour of that person had been got up by both the late and present mayors of Newport, and the most respectable merchants and bankers, to Lord [Normanby. Lovell had been sentenced, with four others, to transportation for life; but the sentence was commuted to five years' imprisonment in the Penitentiary. Two of the prisoners, John Rees and Richard Benfield, who were sentenced with him to transportation, had since returned to their homes. Lovell's sentence commenced in December, 1839, and he had consequently three years and seven months to serve. He had always borne an excellent charac-

ter for honesty, sobriety, and industry, was of a quiet and peaceable disposition, but, being misled by the leaders of the Chartists, he formed one of the mob that assailed the Westgate. Those persons who signed the petition for his release, said, that at the Special Commission held at Monmouth, Lovell, acting under the advice of William Foster Geach, pleaded guilty; Geach assuring him, that if he did so, he would be sentenced to nine months' imprisonment only. Lovell was nevertheless sentenced to transportation for life, and the sentence was afterwards commuted to five years' imprisonment in the Penitentiary. Now, at the Penitentiary the silent system under which Lovell had been placed, was most horrible, and he was treated with all the rigour that the rules of that prison admitted. From all he had heard, he was disposed to think, that the hardships that had been complained of, were confined to the different houses of correction. He had received a letter from a person confined in Lancaster Castle, which stated the conduct of the governor to be most humane and gentlemanly. Now, the question was, whether such treatment was to be inflicted upon persons confined for political offences. Not only were they treated like felons, but they were actually treated worse than felons. He found, that for the most part, the sentences on the most atrocious cases of felony, such as horse stealing—except when they amounted to transportation—were limited to one year, whereas the term for which political offenders were confined, varied from one to five years. When felons were released at the expiration of their time, they were not asked to enter into sureties to keep the peace, but the political prisoners were called upon to find heavy recognizances. Was that fair? He said, it was a difference that ought not to exist. What object was to be gained by keeping these men in prison? To make punishment effective public opinion must go hand in hand with it, and he would maintain that public opinion was against the continued imprisonment of these individuals. After all, a seditious libel was but a matter of opinion, and these prisoners would come out of confinement, without a moral stain upon them. On the contrary, the mass of persons who had signed the petition he had had the honour to present to the House that evening, would re-

ceive them as martyrs. Of what use would it be to keep them in prison? Was it thought they had not received punishment enough? If any hon. Members thought so, let them state so boldly. But they knew nothing of human nature if they thought by persecution to put down public opinion. The petitioners would be satisfied to leave their case in the hands of the House if they could see the system of class legislation done away with. Perhaps, that was the last opportunity which the House would have of receiving a petition signed by so many hundreds of thousands of their fellow-countrymen, and it was for the House to say how far they would meet their wishes, and comply with their prayers. He had discharged his duty in stating the prayer of that petition, to the House, and he trusted he had done so without giving offence to any one, and without prejudicing the case of the persons who had honoured him by committing it to his charge. He left the petition in the hands of the House, and trusted, that the vote they came to, would give general satisfaction to the countless thousands in the country who were awaiting in breathless anxiety the result of their deliberations. The hon. Member concluded by moving,

"That an humble address be presented to her Majesty, humbly praying, that her Majesty will be graciously pleased to take into her merciful consideration the case of all persons confined in England and Wales, for political offences."

Mr. Fox Maule in rising to address himself to the subject, which he agreed with his hon. Friend was one by no means destitute of interest, must in the first place allude to a sentence in the prayer of the petition just presented relating to the levity and frivolity with which the petition in favour of the national charter had been received. He was in the House at the time, and could bear testimony that no symptoms of levity or frivolity had been exhibited on that remarkable occasion when a petition, perhaps the largest ever presented to that House, was laid upon the Table by the hon. Member for Birmingham in a manner which he (Mr. Fox Maule) was sure had won for that hon. Gentleman the respect of all parties in that House, even of those who most differed from the hon. Member in political opinion. And he was sure that there was no wish on the part of any one in the

House to receive the present petition with anything like levity or frivolity. It was a petition from a vast body of the working classes, a body of whom he would say, that whatever the faults that might have led to the situation in which some of them were then placed, had during the last month at least conducted themselves in a manner to secure for them the respect of their countrymen at large, and even of those who thought that the demands they made for political privileges were somewhat exaggerated, and ought not to be conceded. With regard to the precedent quoted by his hon. Friend, of the House interfering to address the Crown for the exercise of the prerogative, he (Mr. F. Maule) thought the case was not one in point, and he believed that the address was not made in that instance until after a much longer period than that mentioned by his hon. Friend, namely, eight months. He did not dispute the right of that House to address the Crown for the exercise of its prerogative; he fully admitted the right of the representatives of the people to address the Crown upon any subject they thought proper; but he much questioned, in the exercise of that privilege, the expediency of that House interfering too frequently, or, except under most urgent circumstances, by an address to the Crown. The exercise of the prerogative was established as an inherent right in the Crown, for the purpose of being extended in all cases where it might be of use or properly applied, and it was for the House to watch that prerogative that it might not be exercised for bad or selfish purposes. But if the House were too frequently to take upon itself to address the Crown for an exercise of this prerogative, he feared that circumstances might arise when parties out of doors having before them the encouragement that the House of Commons would interfere to mitigate their punishment, might be led into the commission of offences, with a hope set before them that perhaps might not be realized. Under these circumstances, he doubted the expediency of taking the course proposed by his hon. Friend. With regard to the treatment of the prisoners who had been convicted of political offences, he could not undertake to follow his hon. Friend through all the details into which he had entered, and some of which were entirely new; but thus much he could say, that in no in-

stance whatever had the sentence of the law been inflicted with a greater degree of severity than the sentence demanded, or than the general rules and regulations of the prison in which the prisoners were confined justified. There had been no desire on the part of the executive Government, no desire on the part of the juries, or of the magistrates, to inflict punishment on these misguided men for the sake of obtaining revenge for the crimes they had committed. If there had been any interference to prevent the people of England from meeting to discuss their wants and grievances—a right he trusted they would always have—then there might have been some excuse for the proceedings that had taken place in 1839 and 1840, and which had led to the events of which his hon. Friend had complained. But no such inclination had been evinced, and it was therefore with the deepest regret that he had beheld those proceedings gradually assuming that unconstitutional appearance which had at last led to the interference of the Government, and that where peace and good order ought to have prevailed, sedition and tumult were abroad. To meet those difficulties, the Government had asked for no extraordinary powers; they simply called into action the law as it stood, and they found that law sufficient for the purpose. Juries had been found to do their duty honestly, impartially, and fairly; and he must say, that if all the now existing punishments were to be at once swept away, it would by no means be an encouragement, when the hour of difficulty might again come—but which he sincerely hoped would never be the case—to juries in courts of justice to fulfil their obligations. He thought his hon. Friend had treated the matter somewhat too lightly. Some of the offences that had been committed might, indeed, be called political offences; but it seemed impossible to designate such crimes as high treason, or taking up arms to oppose the law, merely by that term. It was true, they were political offences; but when in this country so mild a term was applied, it was presumed that something less in magnitude was meant than the crimes for which those persons were suffering whose release his hon. Friend now sought. In the years 1839 and 1840, about 467 persons were tried for offences connected with Chartism, and of that number 379 were convicted. Of the persons so convicted, thirty-nine

were at present in prison, of whose sentences the following periods remained to be undergone:—nine, transportation for life; one, transportation for ten years; one, imprisonment for two years and eleven months; one, imprisonment for two years and four months; three, imprisonment for one year and ten months (sentenced to seven years' transportation); five, imprisonment for ten months; twelve, imprisonment for nine months; one, imprisonment for six months; two, imprisonment for four months; four, imprisonment for three months—total, thirty-nine. The following pardons, commutations, and remissions had been granted to Chartist prisoners:—twelve sentenced to death, commuted, nine, to transportation for life, one, to ten years, and two to one year's imprisonment; eight prisoners received a free pardon; four had sureties remitted; four, sureties reduced; two, hard labour, remitted; four, removed to gaols where the discipline was less severe than at those to which they were committed—total, thirty-four. It would be observed, from the foregoing statements that not one person had suffered the extreme penalty of the law. In nine of the most atrocious cases, the parties were sentenced to transportation for life, and one for ten years. Whenever her Majesty's Government could, consistently with the ends of justice, interfere on the side of mercy, they had never been indisposed so to do. He might mention that liberty had been offered to two individuals on condition of their entering into their own recognizances but they preferred remaining their time. With regard to that part of the prayer of the petitioners alluding to Frost, Williams and Jones, he should be deceiving the House, his constituents, and the country, if he were to hold out any hope that he could be a party to a free pardon being offered to those three individuals. Instead of addressing the House of Commons and asking it to pass the charter without any alteration, he trusted that his hon. Friend would give them the opportunity of discussing the merits of the charter by proposing himself to bring in a bill embodying the whole of the different objects which the charter professed to have in view. That was the only way in which these questions could be properly discussed. There was one part of the charter for which he had already given his vote in that House; there were other parts of it

to which he could not give his consent. But the only proper way to consider them was in reference to each other. With respect to the whole question, he trusted that his hon. Friend (Mr. T. Duncombe), having called the attention of the House to it, and having awakened (if, indeed, it were necessary to awaken) the attention of the Government to the state of the individuals who were now in prison, would not press his motion to a division on the present occasion. It did not appear that his hon. Friend could, by so doing, in any way improve the position in which he had placed himself by his calm and moderate statement in favour of the parties whose cause he had undertaken. With respect to the complaint which his hon. Friend had made as to the disparity of punishment in the cases of some of the humbler class of Chartist offenders, as compared with the amount of punishment inflicted in the case of Mr. Feargus O'Connor, Mr. Bronterre O'Brien, and others, who had greater means at their command, he must be allowed to remind his hon. Friend that different sentences were passed upon different individuals, that some were condemned by the courts in which they were tried, to expiate their offences by simple imprisonment, whilst others were condemned to expiate theirs by hard labour. In all cases, however, a considerable power of mitigation (where circumstances should appear to demand it) was vested in the visiting justices. He would not touch upon the points to which his hon. Friend had referred, comparing the sentence and punishment of Mr. Plunkett and Captain Duff, with the sentences passed upon the Chartist prisoners. It was sufficient for him to inform the House that, outrageous as was the conduct of Mr. Plunkett, he had already suffered far more than the penalty of simple imprisonment, for twice during his confinement he had lost the opportunity of promotion, which he would certainly have obtained had he been at liberty. With respect to Captain Duff, he begged to state that that Gentleman enjoyed no greater relaxations or indulgence at the present moment in the Queen's Bench, than was accorded to Mr. Feargus O'Connor, as long as he was under the charge of the marshal of that prison. It did not occur to him that there were any other points upon which it was necessary for him to address the House upon that occasion. He would, therefore

conclude by saying, that although he deeply regretted the circumstances in which these individuals were placed, still, for the reasons he had stated, he could not consent to become a party to an address to the Crown on their behalf, and he trusted that his hon. Friend would not feel it necessary to press the motion.

Mr. O'Connell declared that, if the hon. Member for Finsbury divided the House upon the motion, he should certainly vote with him, for he thought the speech just made by the Under-Secretary furnished ample materials to show that this was a case in which the House might very properly press upon the Crown, the propriety of exercising its prerogative of mercy. He thought that all the objects of punishment had been fully attained. No Chartist was now breaking the law. The arm of mercy, therefore, might be safely extended. At first, he (Mr. O'Connell) had felt some jealousy about the petition presented by the hon. Member for Finsbury, because it asked only for an extension of the royal mercy to political offenders throughout England and Wales. He thought for the moment that the petitioners had forgotten Ireland; but on reflection, he remembered that Ireland had now no political offenders; that she had no demand for mercy, only for justice. The ends and purposes of justice in the case of these political offenders in England and Wales having been fully satisfied, he (Mr. O'Connell) thought that the time had arrived when the prison doors should be opened, and the offenders discharged.

Mr. Leader could not allow a subject of such importance to the maintenance of peace among the community to pass without making some few observations. There was a feeling among the working classes that there was one law for the rich, and another for the poor. He must confess that his own opinion was of late there had been a great exhibition of partiality with respect to the treatment of parties who had committed offences, and at several meetings which he had attended lately the course which had been adopted with respect to Lord Cardigan and the Earl of Waldegrave, had been compared with that which had been adopted with respect to William Lovett. What, he would ask, was Lovett's offence? Why, he had written a political libel for which he was punished, but in doing so, he had committed no offence that affected his moral

character. What, on the other hand, had been the conduct of Lord Waldegrave? Why, he had been convicted of a brutal assault on a policeman, by which he was greatly injured, and his life for some time despaired of. It was true that Lord Waldegrave was punished for this, but what was the amount of the punishment? Why Lovett, who had committed no moral offence, was confined for a year in one of the most stringent and strict gaols in the country; while Lord Waldegrave was only confined in one of the outer wards of the Queen's Bench, where he could enjoy every luxury, and receive and see his friends. The only inconvenience he was subject to, was not being able to drive a cabriolet during the present fine weather, or go to the Derby. The hon. Gentleman had said that these parties should not have adopted the agitation they did, but that they should have applied to their representatives in the House of Commons. That was the chief complaint, but they had no representatives; and the only resource which they had, was to agitate, in order to make converts to their principles. What harm, he would ask, could it do to liberate these thirty-three men? The Chartists were not now agitating; there was no danger of outbreaks in Manchester or Birmingham; and, therefore, what harm could result from such an act of grace on the part of the Crown? He begged of the House not hastily to dismiss this petition from its consideration.

Mr. *Gillon* denied that the petition had been received with levity by the Members of that House. He believed there were many who would object to go to the whole extent of the demands made in that petition; but it would be most unfair to suppose that the Members of that House were indifferent to the prayers of 1,500,000 of their fellow subjects. It appeared to him that the people having been shown that they could not recklessly set the law at defiance, some mitigation of the punishment of these men might now take place. He thought another reason for agreeing to the proposition of the hon. Member for Finsbury, was, the great disproportion of the punishment to the offence. It was a sufficient justification of the assertion that was made in many quarters, that there was one measure of justice meted out to the Peer, and another to the poor man; and he could not help referring to the case

of the Earl of Waldegrave, who was suffering a trifling imprisonment for what a man had a short time previously been sentenced to seven years' transportation. He trusted much to the returning good sense of the Chartists, and even if the hon. Member did not press his motion to a division, he was satisfied that the discussion would be productive of much good. He believed that these men were beginning to see the folly and absurdity of their conduct, and he hoped they would see no more of it, any more than of the unnatural coalition that had lately taken place between the Chartists and the Tories. He should give his cordial support to the motion.

Mr. *Hume* thought the present was not the time to discuss the conduct of the Chartists, but what they were to take into consideration was, whether, as had been urged by the hon. Member who had preceded him, the punishment of these unfortunate men had not been greatly disproportioned to their offence. He believed much of the severity exercised towards these men arose from the unfounded apprehensions which then filled the public minds, and which subsequent events had shown to be completely unfounded. He sincerely trusted that the Government would see the justice and expediency of re-considering the case of these men who still remained in confinement, and confer a boon upon the millions of that country by restoring them to liberty.

Mr. *Warburton* observed that a vast number of the Chartist prisoners had been treated in a way formerly unknown to the law. Political offenders only a few years since were never treated with so much severity. He called upon the Government therefore, to shorten the confinement of those who were now in prison.

Mr. *Wakley* said, that as political offenders had within the last three or four years been treated in an almost unprecedented manner, he thought the Government might fairly exercise the leniency desired by the petitioners. He wondered much at the silence of Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House in this discussion, knowing well that one favourable word from the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth would be of immense importance towards the alteration of the sufferings of those men who had been imprisoned without ever having intended any violation of the laws of the



country. The hon. Member, the Under Secretary of State, had alluded to the manner in which the working classes could appeal to their representatives. They had no representatives. It was that circumstance that rendered their minds so feverish and restless—it was that circumstance that made them so discontented, and so justly discontented. He did not blame them for this. On the contrary, he thought that they ought to be discontented until they were fairly represented—they would be unworthy the name they bore if they did not claim the right to be represented. What was the consequence of their not being so? We made the laws easy for ourselves, but heavy for them. Was the poor man tried by his equals? Whoever thought so, he would ask him to look at the special jury system. His hon. colleague did not seek for the liberation of Frost, Williams, and Jones; he merely sought the liberation of those persons confined in England. The terms of his motion were, that her Majesty would be “graciously pleased to take into her merciful consideration the cases of all persons confined in England and Wales for political offences.” He did not move for their immediate discharge. The meaning of the motion was merely that their cases might be taken into consideration. That was a motion to which every Member of the House except the Members of Government might agree, and he thought it unseemly in Government to oppose a motion of so unostentatious a character. By recording their sentiments in favour of the motion, they would be doing a great deal to produce satisfaction in the public mind, and it really appeared to him that there were no grounds whatever for any Member of that House voting against the motion.

Sir R. Peel did not think that the hon. Member had any right to complain of his silence on this or on any other question. He did not think that he could be charged with evading the difficulties of any subject brought before the House, and he felt that he owed them an apology rather for the frequency with which he expressed his opinion than for remaining silent. On all questions he had never withheld his opinions from the House, and on the present occasion, he would not follow the course of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, nor put such a shallow construction on the motion as he had done.

He was certain that the colleague of the hon. Member would have the manliness to repudiate that construction. That hon. Gentleman said that he thought the time had arrived when the political offenders detained in custody ought to be discharged. Other hon. Members had also argued the question fairly. They had said that the case of these prisoners was entitled to the consideration of the Crown, with the view of their being discharged. That was the intention of the motion. Do not let the House, therefore, deceive the public by saying that the object of the petitioners was merely to recommend the case of these offenders to the deliberate consideration of the Crown. The object was, if the motion was carried, to obtain from the Crown, through the interference of the House of Commons, a remission of the sentences of these prisoners. Now, it was the duty of the Crown to consider all cases of that sort, and to show lenity and indulgence in in those particular cases where there were grounds for doing so. But a motion of the House of Commons, asking the Crown to take a particular case into its consideration, meant nothing more nor less than that the time had come when a pardon might be safely granted. He meant to act in the present case in conformity with those principles on which he had always acted when he was Secretary of State. He thought that the consideration of those cases ought, consistently to be left with the Crown—exclusively with the Crown. He thought it was a dangerous thing for a popular assembly to establish a precedent which might fetter the discretion and judgment of the Crown, by expressing any recommendation on such subjects. He thought that the bounds of the constitution had clearly separated the functions of the House of Commons from those of the Crown. He recollected a similar motion was made for the liberation of Mr. Hunt from Winchester gaol, when he was Secretary of State. On that occasion, as Secretary of State, he claimed the right of exercising the prerogative of the Crown, considering that while the interference of the House of Commons ought never to prevent him from doing what was just, he at the same time felt that in the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown he ought not to be influenced by any opinion which the House of Commons might express. It was, therefore, on constitutional grounds, and from his unwillingness to establish a

dangerous precedent, that he would, acting in conformity with his former opinions, oppose the motion of the hon. Member for Finsbury. He would oppose no obstacle whatever to the consideration of the cases of these prisoners by the Crown. It was the duty of the advisers of the Crown to consider the effect which a remission of punishment might have on the public mind. He trusted that the advisers of the Crown would never be influenced in such cases by a desire for popularity, but that they would bear in mind the permanent interests of society. He hoped the House would recollect the painful duty imposed on the Crown in such cases. It was the Crown, and not the House of Commons, which had the opportunity of ascertaining the state of the public mind, and the grounds on which such cases were, or were not, entitled to its consideration. He thought that they would be placing the Crown in an unfair, unconstitutional, and in an unjust position, if they, a popular assembly, claimed the right of interfering in cases which properly came under the prerogative of the Crown, and of the Crown alone. A popular assembly, he felt quite certain, would never ask for the infliction of punishment. It would always be in favour of a remission of punishments, and he repeated that he thought they would establish a dangerous precedent if they consented to the motion then before the House. He had stated fairly his opinion on this subject, and while he felt bound to oppose the motion, he, at the same time did not wish to throw any obstacles in the way of these cases being considered by the Crown.

Mr. Easthope could not give a silent vote on this question. He perfectly agreed in the general principle laid down by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, but he thought that this was a case in which the House might digress from the usual rule, and for that reason he would vote for the motion of his hon. Friend, the Member for Finsbury. Some of the inhabitants of the town which he had the honour to represent had presented a petition to the House, in which they expressed their desire that one of those offenders should become a candidate to represent that town in Parliament; and as he was particularly desirous that nothing should interfere with the expression of their opinions, he had great pleasure in supporting the motion of his hon. Friend.

Sir De Lacy Evans said, he thought it an additional reason in favour of this motion, that the only two Members of that House who had expressed an opinion against it, the hon. Under-Secretary for the Home Department, and the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel), had not addressed themselves to the merits of the case, but had entirely defended the course they took on some rather fine-drawn doctrines of constitutional law. He would again draw their attention to the fact that this petition was signed by upwards of a million of their fellow-subjects, and of that class who were not represented in that House. They did not come forward praying for an extension of privileges for themselves, but merely to solicit the alleviation of the punishment of those misguided persons who still remain in the prisons of this country for political offences. Under these circumstances, he trusted that the Government would take a favourable view of their case.

Sir B. Hall wished to say a few words in reference to the state of those districts in Wales in which the recent disturbances occurred. He was called on at the time to take an active part in quelling those disturbances; and, being intimately acquainted with the country, he must say he had never known it so tranquil and quiet as it was at the present moment. He must also say, that notwithstanding the present reduction of wages, the stagnation of business, and the depressed state of the iron trade, there was not the least agitation among the working people; and he thought the period had arrived when a merciful consideration ought to be bestowed to poor persons confined in England and Wales. The hon. Under-Secretary of State had admitted that the whole country was in a state of tranquillity, and as he could conceive no more auspicious time, he hoped the House would support the motion. He was glad to say that parties out of doors would have the satisfaction of knowing that no expression of opinion against the merciful consideration of these persons had been given in that House.

Mr. Aglionby, who rose amid loud cries of "Divide," said, he thought the House having spent so many days in debates of less importance, might allow five minutes to any hon. Member who wished to state his opinion on this subject. It was admitted that in one case, whatever might

be the opinion as to the constitutional mode of procedure, the expression of an opinion by that House had led to a mitigation of the punishment, and he could not but think that any expression of an opinion by that House would have its due weight with the Crown. He saw no impropriety in the House interfering. It was the constitutional mode in which the people were entitled to represent their grievances to the Crown. He had strong hopes that they would be successful in the present case, and he was encouraged in this hope from the speech of the hon. Under-Secretary of State, which was filled with humane expressions and vindications of clemency. With respect to the Chartists he thought they had not done their duty by them. If hon. Gentlemen had attended more their general meetings and, evinced more sympathy with the interests of that class, he thought the public would not have heard so much of the disaffection which existed among them towards that House.

*Viscount Sandon*: Although he represented a large constituency, consisting in no small degree of the working classes in the same sphere of life as these political offenders, yet he felt bound to vote against the motion of the hon. Member for Finsbury. He could not consider the objections taken by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth as mere matter of official etiquette. He thought it would be dangerous for the House to interfere with the prerogative of the Crown, and he could not depart from a great constitutional principle, however much he felt for the situation of these misled individuals, who, in his opinion, had been more sinned against, than sinning. However much they had been led into agitation by persons who had since deserted them, he could not consent to go beyond the principles of the constitution, which separated the authority of the House of Commons from the prerogative of the Crown.

*Lord John Russell* certainly could conceive cases which might form an exception to the general rule laid down by the right hon. Baronet opposite. The question of Sir Manasseh Lopez, which he (*Lord J. Russell*) had brought forward some years ago, was an exception to the general rule. On that occasion he withdrew his motion, after having elicited a statement from *Lord Castlereagh*, then Secretary of State, that the motion would

not be any obstacle in the remission of as much of the sentence as the advisers of the Crown should deem meet. In regard to the present motion, he felt that it interposed great difficulties in the way of these cases being considered by the Crown. Petitions, praying for mercy in the mitigation of the sentences of the law, ought to be directed to the Crown, and not to the House of Commons. He had felt the difficulty he had alluded to in a very great degree some years ago, when he first filled the office of Secretary of State, in regard to the sentence which had been passed in the case of the *Dorchester labourers*. It appeared to him on reviewing that case that though he felt it to be his duty at the time to advise a remission of the sentence, he also felt the great difficulties in the way of doing so, in consequence of the motion which had been made on the subject in the House of Commons. He was obliged to declare that if that motion had been carried, he could not have given the advice which he had done; yet, having given that advice, he felt that considerable evil had been produced by the remission not appearing to be the spontaneous act of the Crown; and also, in consequence of the triumphant boastings then made of the interference of the House of Commons. He, therefore, advised the hon. Member who made this motion, to consider that those who were charged with the responsibility of advising the Crown, instead of feeling themselves more at liberty from an expression of the sentiments of the House of Commons, would really feel themselves more restricted in any advice which they might give, and instead of the remission of the punishment having the proper and natural effect of an act of mercy in preventing men again violating the law, it might, on the contrary, embolden them to commit other offences, from the belief that there were individuals or parties in the House of Commons disposed to take up their case—it would lead them to look for the remission of a sentence, not to the Crown, the natural and constitutional source, but to a popular body, to whom the prerogative of mercy did not belong. Entertaining these sentiments, and without saying one word as to the particular cases noticed by the hon. Under Secretary of State, he would, on the general principle he had stated, vote against the motion.

*Colonel Sibthorp* opposed the motion.

Mr. *Ward* begged his hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury to reflect on the nature of the motion, and not to press the House under the circumstances, to a division. His hon. Friend had seen the imputations to which the motion gave rise; they were told it was not a motion honestly brought forward, but had reference to questions out of doors. The best answer, however, to that imputation, into which he was sorry to find that the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool had fallen, was, that the petition had been in preparation for many months, and that it had emanated at a time when no one entertained the remotest idea of a dissolution. His opinion was, that if his hon. Friend had been desirous of submitting his motion to the House at the moment most embarrassing to Ministers he would have chosen the present, because it was impossible for any Government, whatever their feelings might be, to concur in it without exposing themselves to the imputation of taking such a course for the purpose of gaining popularity out of doors. Let them discard those unworthy considerations, and look solely to the merits of the case; and on that subject he should say he differed entirely from the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, and the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, because he did think there were circumstances in case which not only warranted, but in the some degree called for the interference of the House. Political crimes were very undefined in their nature; and although he did not censure either the Judges, the Juries, or the Government under whom the late prosecutions had taken place, he did feel that some of those political offenders had been treated with great severity. He admitted, however, that in other instances the grievous nature of the crime committed merited the severest punishment. There could be no doubt, too, but it was necessary at the time these prosecutions had been begun, to take strong measures for the peace of the community. Still he was persuaded, that many of those parties now in confinement had more than expiated the offences they had committed. He was at the same time of opinion, that after the explanations which had been given by the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, his hon. Friend might injure his own cause by proceeding to a division.

Viscount *Sandon* disclaimed throwing

any imputation on the hon. Gentleman as to the motive which induced him to bring forward his motion. All he did was to advert to to what he conceived might be said, out of doors, as to the intention, at all events, as to the effect of a motion of this description at this particular moment.

Mr. *Thomas Duncombe* in reply, said, that if the noble Lord had imputed to him that the motion was brought forward for election purposes, he could have readily removed that impression by assuring him and the House that this petition was in circulation and receiving signatures between two and three months ago. His object was to prevail upon the House to address her Majesty to discharge all persons committed for political offences at home; he therefore had a right to complain of his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for mixing up Frost's case and the other cases where the parties had been transported with the present motion. In reply to the appeal which the hon. Member for Sheffield had made to him not to press the motion to a division, he believed, that he should be betraying his duty to those whom he represented on this occasion, if he did not call for an expression of the opinion of the House. He had brought the motion forward in no hostile spirit against the Government, or the hon. Gentleman on the opposition side of the House. He only wished, that the House could be unanimous upon the subject, and would declare that the case of these individuals should be considered with a view to their discharge. He should then be too happy to withdraw his motion; but as he had no assurance of that act of amnesty, which was so much wished by thousands of their countrymen, being granted, unless an address were carried to the Throne; he felt bound to go to a division.

The House divided:—Ayes 58; Noes 58. And the numbers being equal, Mr. *Speaker* stated, that he considered that the vote, if carried, would interfere with the prerogative of the Crown, and therefore declared himself with the Noes.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Aglionby, H. A.	Brotherton, J.
Barnard, E. G.	Buller, C.
Berkeley, hon. H.	Bulwer, Sir L.
Bewes, T.	Bushfield, W.
Bridgeman, H.	Butler, hon. C.
Brodie, W. B.	Callaghan, D.

Collier, J.  
Collins, W.  
Currie, R.  
Dennistoun, J.  
Duke, Sir J.  
Easthope, J.  
Ellis, W.  
Evans, Sir De L.  
Ewart, W.  
Fielden, J.  
Gillon, W. D.  
Greg, R. H.  
Hall, Sir B.  
Hawes, B.  
Hector, C. J.  
Hindley, C.  
Humphery, J.  
Jones, J.  
Langdale, hon. C.  
Leader, J. T.  
Lushington, C.  
Molesworth, Sir W.  
Muntz, G. F.  
Muskett, G. A.  
O'Brien, C.

O'Connell, M. J.  
Peckell, Captain  
Protheroe, E.  
Pryme, G.  
Roche, E. B.  
Rundle, J.  
Salwey, Colonel  
Scholefield, J.  
Sinclair, Sir G.  
Stewart, J.  
Strickland, Sir G.  
Talfourd, Mr. Serj.  
Thornely, T.  
Villiers, hon. C. P.  
Wakley, T.  
Walter, J.  
Warburton, H.  
Ward, H. G.  
White, A.  
Williams, W.  
Wood, B.

## TELLERS.

Duncombe, T.  
Hume, J.

*List of the Noxs.*

Adam, Admiral  
Antrobus, E.  
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.  
Beutinck, Lord G.  
Bethell, R.  
Broadley, H.  
Bruce, C. L. C.  
Buller, Sir J. Y.  
Clay, W.  
Clerk, Sir G.  
Clive, hon. R. H.  
Derby, G.  
Denison, W. J.  
Elliot, hon. J. E.  
Esteourt, T.  
Fort, J.  
Fremantle, Sir T.  
Goulburn, rt. hn. H.  
Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.  
Greene, T.  
Greig, D.  
Grosvener, Lord R.  
Halford, H.  
Harcourt, G. G.  
Herries, rt. hn. J. C.  
Howard, hn. C. W. G.  
Hurt, F.  
Ingilis, Sir R. H.  
Jackson, Mr. Serj.  
Jermya, Earl  
Kemble, H.

Knight, H. G.  
Lucas, E.  
Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.  
Mackenzie, T.  
Marsland, T.  
Maule, hon. F.  
Morpeith, Viscount  
Palmer, G.  
Palmerston, Viscount  
Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.  
Pigot, rt. hn. D.  
Plumptre, J. P.  
Pusey, P.  
Richards, R.  
Rose, rt. hn. Sir G.  
Russell, Lord J.  
Rutherford, rt. hn. A.  
Sandon, Viscount  
Sibthorp, Colonel  
Slaney, R. A.  
Smyth, Sir G. H.  
Stuart, W. V.  
Teignmouth, Lord  
Wilde, Sir T.  
Wood, C.  
Wood, Colonel  
Wyse, T.

## TELLERS.

Parker, J.  
Stanley, hon. E. J.

*Motion negatived.*

CHURCH-RATES.] Mr. Easthope after presenting petitions praying for the abolition of Church-rates from a number of places, proceeded to address the House on the motion of which he had given notice, for leave to bring in a bill

to abolish Church-rates, and to empower the Members of the Established Church to levy a tax on their pews and seats for the maintenance of churches. He felt assured, that he should not in vain entreat that the House would abstract itself from that excitement under which both it and the country had for some time passed been found, and apply its attention to a subject which, though not so exciting in its character, was not less important than many of those questions which had been occupying the public mind, inasmuch as it bore an intimate relation to the religious feelings and privileges of the people. He was confident, that the House would on this occasion set a good example, and would show to the country that even in the midst of any excitement, however intense, it was not inattentive to a subject that concerned the consciences of a considerable portion of the people and intimately affected the religious peace of the community. He was very desirous, in bringing this question before the House, to be expressly understood as having most earnestly and most honestly endeavoured within his own view, and he believed it was within the view of a great number of the petitioners whose prayers he had presented to the House, to promote the cause of the religion of the Established Church, and to free the best interests of that Church from those objections and from many of those difficulties and obstructions which it laboured under, and which were so deeply to be lamented. There was nothing he should more sincerely deplore than to be mistaken, either by the House or the country, as having for his object the lessening, in the smallest degree, or by any means damaging the religious influence which the Established Church actually possessed, or ought to possess, for the benefit of the community; and he did hope, that in this discussion they would abstract themselves from party views, and that whatever differences of opinion they might entertain with respect to the mode by which they would pursue their object, they would also abstain from unjust imputations of any planned intention to interfere with the religious influence of the establishment. He approached this discussion with inexpressible surprise at the fact of this question having been suffered to remain so long a subject of discontent and complaint. It was scarcely

conceivable how a cause which was obviously so much to be lamented, which had excited so much irritation, and which was in every way so disadvantageous to the religious repose of the country, should have been permitted to exist against the expressed opinions of many of the first authorities who had sat in Parliament. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that there was scarcely an individual of distinguished rank and influence now in the House, or who had for many years held a seat in it, who had not considered this question as one of important difficulty, of great disadvantage, and one which it was most desirable for the interests of the country should be put at rest. In claiming the indulgent patience of the House, he would promise to requite that indulgence by occupying its time as briefly as he could, but he felt it was impossible, consistently with the duty he owed to those individuals whose petitions he had presented, and to the importance of the question itself, not to recal to the attention of the House, many of the sentiments which had formerly been expressed by individual members of it, tending to show the great importance they attached to a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the question; and how imperatively, in their estimation, justice demanded that the subject should be calmly considered, and finally settled. He would first remind the House of the debate that took place in the session of 1834, when Lord Althorp (now Earl Spencer) brought forward a motion for the settlement of this question. The noble Lord in the course of his statement to the House read the following words:—

“He considered that the dissenters were perfectly justified in bringing forward the detail of their grievances at this particular juncture, on this particular point, inasmuch as he thought that there was a great difference, in point of principle, between the payment by dissenters of tithes and church-rates. Church-rate was a tax laid on at the discretion of others, as far as regarded its amount; and the dissenters who were compelled to pay it, felt that they were compelled to pay for the administration of worship under a system they did not approve. For this reason, in his opinion, the dissenters had a right to complain of it; and he thought, further, that the Legislature was bound so far to relieve them. But while the system of church-rates, as the law stood at present, was grievous to dissenters, it could not be in any way satisfactory to the members of the establishment. The payment of church-rates had been refused in different parishes,

and the remedy given to the church had not been found sufficient to enforce the demand.”\*

If any one had predicted after the question had been brought forward under such auspices, and after it had produced so much discontent, that it would have remained unsettled for ten long years, the man who hazarded such a prophecy would not have had credit for sagacity, nor have obtained credence for his prediction. Not only were the expressions of the noble mover on that occasion strong and pointed, but the expressions of other individuals, of rank and weight in the House, were in entire accordance. The noble Member for North Lancashire, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, in the same debate, spoke as follows:—

“He was perfectly ready to admit such maintenance of an establish church ought to be conducted upon principles and in a manner the least irritating and offensive to other parties, both as respected the amount and the mode of collection. He was equally ready to acknowledge that church-rates, as they stood, formed to the dissenters a serious and substantial grievance. . . . His hon. Friend had said (and he appeared to attach considerable importance to the statement), that it was only in fifty or sixty parishes that anything like successful opposition had been offered to the levying of church-rates; but his hon. Friend had not stated in how many instances opposition had been put down for a time in order to be renewed at a future opportunity, should no proposition be brought forward by the executive, and submitted to Parliament for the relief of Dissenters, and all parties upon whom that burthen might unjustly press. His hon. Friend forgot to tell them how many hundred parishes there were waiting to follow the example of those which had successfully resisted, should the decision of the Legislature give them no hope of relief. He would ask his hon. Friend what would have been the spirit of disappointment, the effusion of bitterness, with which the news would have been received throughout the parishes of England, if the payers of church-rates were to be told that Parliament, acting under the advice of his noble Friend, had not only determined to adopt no remedy, but were resolved to uphold the original form of church-rates to their full amount, with all that was vexatious and oppressive in their mode of collection, or unnecessary in their amount? Did his hon. Friend think, that the best mode of advancing the true interests of the church was by maintaining every one of its abuses? Did any man suppose that those interests were to be promoted by a profanation of the church itself year after year—by a desecration of the house of God by a squabble

\* Hansard, Vol. xxii. third series, p. 1013.

about church-rates at each succeeding Easter?"

He (Mr. Easthope) could not possibly use terms more impressive or appropriate upon this subject, and they had the advantage not only of the eloquence, but of the character and influence of the noble Lord. He hoped that the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of Oxford would allow him, with all possible respect, to appeal to him, and to enquire whether some of that prejudice with which the hon. Baronet was accustomed to approach this discussion, ought not to give way to the conviction which must be produced by a review of the prophecy of the noble Lord and its fulfilment. All that strife and bitterness—all that irritating conflict—all that profanation and desecration of the house of God—had continued and increased, and were exhibited, he would not say every year, but every day, to the destruction of all those charitable and kindly feelings which religious men of every class were anxious to encourage and promote. There was another authority pointing to the importance and necessity of settling this painful question which he could not forbear to cite, and which must have great influence with the House. He alluded to the right hon. Member for Tamworth, whom he was sorry not to see in his place, but who, though temporarily absent, surely could not regard the discussion of this subject with indifference. In reference to the time when Lord Althorp brought the question under the consideration of the House, the right hon. Baronet said:—

"He would not attempt to gain popularity at the expense of the noble Lord, by concealing what he had himself intended to do; and therefore he now declared that, although in the course of the present Session he should have attempted, had he remained in office, to effect an immediate settlement of Church-rates, yet it was his intention to adopt the principle of the noble Lord—to extinguish all equivocal and objectional charges, but to provide for the repair of the fabric of the Church out of the general revenue of the country, by an annual provision, to the extent, and for the objects contemplated by the noble Lord. It was right that the noble Lord should have the benefit of this declaration."

So far as any question could be important to the maintenance of social harmony, to the promotion of satisfaction among the great body of the Dissenters, there was not a single question, excepting that of the Irish Church,

which so much pressed for an immediate practical settlement as this of Church-rates,

And on this subject of Church-rates, surely the noble Lord, adhering, as he professed, to his former principle, and being in possession of all the facts of the case, surely the noble Lord himself, one of the parties to the bill of Lord Althorp, and being now perfectly able to accomplish his object, surely he was bound to proceed, and not to leave unsettled for another year a subject so pregnant with the seeds of discord and collision. In consideration of the interests of the Church establishment—for the satisfaction of a large body of the people—for the accomplishment of their own pledges—to promote subordination and obedience to the law—to suppress individual complaints of grievance—surely, to accomplish all these objects, a Government fit to be intrusted with the management of public affairs would, without delay, take this matter into their own hands, and not suffer the law respecting Church-rates to be made a theme of discussion in public meetings, and a subject of resistance by parochial martyrs for another twelvemonth."

These sentiments were delivered in the debate of the 25th May, 1835, and he (Mr. Easthope) could not help expressing his surprise and regret, in which he was convinced many hon. Members participated, that this question, in spite of such language as that he had quoted, remained still unsettled. Year after year, discontent had accumulated to the great damage of the interest of the Church, to the extinction of harmony and good feeling, and to the perpetuation of strife and animosity. There was another authority on the same point, of which the country ought not to lose sight; and which very plainly, but at the same time very forcibly, impressed upon the House the necessity of settling this question, and predicted the consequences of deferring that settlement, which prediction had been but too lamentably fulfilled. He alluded to the right hon. Member for Montgomery, who, on the 21st April, 1834, had told the House that nothing like an evasion of the question could mitigate the dissatisfaction, and that the longer a complete and final settlement was postponed, the more would the prevailing bitterness be augmented. The words of the right hon. Member were these:—

"He agreed with the noble Lord (Lord Althorp) in thinking that the disputes which had arisen on the subject of Church-rates, in different vestries, were likely, if allowed to continue,

to prove prejudicial, not only to the peace of particular parishes, but to the general interests of religion. It was, indeed, said by his hon. Friend, the Member for the University of Oxford, that the resistance to the payment of rates was confined to forty or fifty parishes; but could any one doubt that the same spirit, when inflamed both by religious animosity and personal pecuniary interest, would progressively spread itself to a much more formidable extent? Another motive for altering or, at least, regulating the mode of imposing these payments, arose from the abuses which had notoriously grown up, and the improper charges which had been included to swell out their amount. For instance, the parish of Christ-church, Surrey, had been in the habit of voting an augmentation to the income of the minister out of the Church-rates, to the amount of 400*l.* a-year. If that were an augmentation consented to by all the parties who paid Church-rates in that parish, it would be highly meritorious and commendable; but if, on the contrary, it should be imposed merely by a majority in opposition to the wishes of the minority, he could conceive nothing more calculated to create irritation and resistance, particularly if that minority were Dissenters from the Established Church. It was obvious that if such an allowance could regularly be voted, there were no limits to which it might not be carried.”\*

If, in the parish of Christchurch, they had ceased to pay the salary of the minister out of the Church-rates, or, if in the parish of Christchurch, Church-rates had been extinguished, the objectionable practice had been continued in Dover, as appeared by a proceeding in the Court of Arches on Wednesday last, and which he found reported in the public newspapers. It was stated by the counsel on one side, and admitted by the counsel on the other (the hon. and learned Member for Cardiff whom he did not see in his place), that in the Parish of Dover it had long been the habit to pay the annual stipend of the minister out of the Church-rates. This custom had produced the usual consequence, resistance, and an individual in rather humble life was under monition, and was exposed to the expenses and annoyances resulting from such a proceeding, whilst society there was involved in all the evils arising from this distressing schism. He (Mr. Easthope) submitted with confidence, whether it could be advantageous to any valuable interest, and especially to the religion of the Established Church, that such scenes should be permitted to continue. It would be

obvious, that a Church so wealthy, and so amply endowed for the purposes of religious instruction, ought not to resort to any such practice for the payment of its ministers. The practice was utterly indefensible; he did not believe that there was an hon. Member in the House who would support it; yet it had not only prevailed in 1834, but it existed down to the present moment, and was still the ground of strife and conflict. An interval occurred between the time when the question was introduced under the powerful auspices of Lord Althorp, and the period when it was again brought forward by Lord Monteagle. He need not occupy the time of the House in stating the reasons why the plan of Lord Althorp failed, or why that of Lord Monteagle was unsuccessful; he would only express his deep regret, that the latter had failed, for surely nothing more equitable, or more desirable with a view to the interests of the Established Church or the promotion of religion, could possibly have been devised. It would be in the recollection of the House, that the accounts moved for by Lord Althorp in 1834, showed, that the amount of church-rates was then about 560,000*l.*; and his Lordship then stated, that there could be no question that more than half that expenditure was of a very equivocal character, and that by prudent management it might be avoided. He believed it would scarcely be disputed, that a large part of the total sum raised by church-rates, constituting an intolerable grievance, and being extorted from those who conscientiously differed from the doctrines of the Established Church, was occasioned by needless and profligate expenditure. He remembered, that in a debate upon a question of a somewhat similar cast the hon. Baronet, the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir Robert Inglis) said, that he never would voluntarily pay anything towards a system of religion from which he conscientiously differed. Such was the substance of the hon. Baronet's declaration in a discussion, he believed, on the grant to the college of Maynooth; and surely the rule which the hon. Baronet prescribed to himself ought to be extended to others: and he, of all men, ought to be most ready to relieve those who complained, that they could not conscientiously pay church-rates. According to the opinions of Members of a former House of Commons, which he had

\* Hansard, vol. xxiii. p. 1052.



read, it might have been expected, that ere now this intolerable nuisance would have been abated; but he would ask the House whether church-rates had ceased to be a source of conflict and animosity? The hon. Member for Kilkenny (Mr. Hume) had that night presented a petition from a gentleman who had formerly been a victim, and had endured incarceration rather than consent to pay the demand. In the town he had the honour to represent, another individual had been imprisoned for the same cause, and on a former occasion, he had stated, that that individual was an object of general sympathy and commiseration. One of the largest meetings ever held in that town, indeed, one of the largest meetings he had ever attended, had been held for the purpose of expressing that sympathy, and to petition the House for his release. He wished on the present occasion to recal the attention of the House to a fact he had formerly stated, viz., that in a ward of the borough of Leicester, containing, he believed, nearly 20,000 out of its 60,000 inhabitants, Mr. Baines, whilst in prison for the non-payment of church-rates, was unanimously elected to fill a vacancy in the corporation. Surely, that fact afforded some evidence of sympathy. He had also stated, on a former occasion, what he felt it his duty to repeat upon the present, that the ministers of religion had found this oppressive and unjust impost, one of the greatest hindrances—one of the most aggravated difficulties—one of the severest afflictions in the course of the discharge of their sacred duties. It had been stated to him by a gentleman whose name was well known in the history of this country, and connected by blood with the great man who rendered that name memorable—the rev. Mr. Erskine, now removed to another place—that during his ministerial career, nothing had given him greater pain, or more obstructed his clerical functions, than the disputes on the question of church-rates. Surely, this was a fact well deserving the attention of the friends of the Established Church. No hon. Member, he was confident, would be found to argue, that any good could possibly arise to the Established Church from the conflicts now carried on in all quarters. He asked himself this question—has the prediction, that this strife and struggle would continue and be increased been fulfilled? Why, at this moment, legal pro-

ceedings were pending in relation to no fewer than the following places—Braintree, Bradford, Headcorn, Sutton Valence, Hackney, Brentford, Portsea, Weymouth, Dover, Ringwood, Bedford, Hayes, Wivenhoe, Lancaster, Great Yarmouth, Abergavenny. Not only had church-rates been extinguished in large populous towns, but in places of minor importance, situated in rural districts, where the influence of the parochial clergy might be supposed to be most powerful. Who could suppose, that the kindly intercourse which ought to be the companion and helpmate of religious instruction could co-exist with hostile and irritating proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts? Families were alarmed at the threat of heavy costs—their minds from day to day were occupied with the dread of possible incarceration, and their feelings were perpetually irritated and excited by being required to pay that which their consciences told them they ought to refuse. He knew, that he should now be told, as on former occasions, by the hon. Baronet, the Member for the University of Oxford, that this was not a question of conscience, but of property; but how could that be a question of property which depended on the will and pleasure of individuals meeting in vestry at Easter? How could that be a question of property when it depended upon the vote of the parishioners whether any rate at all should be fixed? If it were really a question of property, the only point to be decided would be how much should be collected. The question, however, always was whether any should be collected [*No, no*]. The hon. Baronet said “No, no,” and he understood him to advert to the law of the case as delivered by Sir Nicholas Tyn dal in the judgment he delivered in the Exchequer Chamber in the Braintree case. That learned judge had indicated rather than laid down the positive law—that the parish church must be maintained, and that if the case came before the court in another form, it might possibly receive a different adjudication. But with all deference to the hon. Baronet, he might express the confidence he felt in the opinion of her Majesty’s Attorney-general, who on this subject had addressed a letter to the noble Member for North Lancashire. That learned and hon. Gentleman had laid it down as his positive opinion—as a matter upon which he entertained no

doubt—as the result of most careful consideration, and not as a hasty declaration in the course of debate, which a Member, however learned, might be allowed to revise—that church-rates were not to be dealt with under any existing law as a question of property—that no rate could by possibility be made without the consent of the majority of the vestry, and that no rate otherwise imposed could be maintained either in the consistorial courts or in the courts of common law. In the same pamphlet the Attorney-general referred to the authorities of Baron Bayley and Lord Lyndhurst, and to a decision formerly delivered by Sir W. Wynne, and then proceeded as follows :—

“I may boldly ask, if this were law, would it not have been acted upon in some one of the many instances in which church-rates have been refused of late years? The civilians, and the common lawyers, and equity lawyers, who have been consulted about the mode of dealing with an obstinate vestry, while they have suggested the possibility of succeeding by mandamus or monition, or bill in equity, appear never to have thought of the plain, straightforward course of the churchwardens making a rate by their own authority. Let it not be supposed that this has been prevented by that which, were there such a power upon a refusal by the vestry, would be a shallow device—an adjournment for a twelvemonth. Such an adjournment, or any adjournment with the intention of refusing, is the refusal of a rate and would clearly admit the churchwardens to the exercise of any power which a refusal confers upon them.”

He might here observe that it was within the knowledge of the House that, in general, church-rates were defeated by parish vestries adjourning the question for six or twelve months, the Attorney-general said, that it was impossible for such a shallow device to succeed if the churchwardens could proceed on their own authority to make a rate, but that any rate to be binding must be imposed by the majority of the parish. He then proceeded as follows :—

“But there is no ground for saying that the authority of churchwardens in making a rate goes farther than this—that if a vestry is regularly called to make a rate, and none except the churchwardens attend, the churchwardens then constituting the vestry may make a rate; as I conceive that they might do any other act competent to the vestry, of which they are members. Lord Holt is said to have been of opinion, ‘that if there be public notice given to the parishioners, and they will not come, the churchwardens may make a rate without

them.’ I have no doubt that this opinion is sound, and that it is the only foundation for the notion, that the churchwardens can make a rate without the parishioners. A more extensive power in the churchwardens was unknown to Lyndwood, and Gibson, elaborately defining the power of the churchwardens in making a rate, must be taken to deny it: ‘Rates for the reparation of the church are to be made by the churchwardens, together with the parishioners assembled upon public notice given in the church. And the major part of them that appear shall bind the parish; or, if none appear, the churchwardens alone may make the rate, because they, and not the parishioners, are to be cited and punished in default of repairs. But the bishop cannot direct a commission to rate the parishioners, and appoint what each one shall pay.’”

With all respect for the opinion of the hon. Baronet, the Member for the University of Oxford, he (Mr. Easthope) apprehended that the House and the country would be more inclined to place confidence in a legal question of so much intricacy and difficulty, in the opinion of her Majesty’s Attorney-general, and on this ground he thought there was no probability of any adjudication declaring that the churchwardens and clergymen, being in a minority, had power to make a rate without the consent of the parishioners in the usual mode of assembling for the purpose. If such were the case, he would ask whether it was likely that this question would thus be satisfactorily set at rest? Was it probable that hereafter it would present itself in a less complicated shape, surrounded by fewer difficulties, or less forcibly pressed upon the attention of Parliament than at the present moment? On the contrary, was it not to be expected, that in future years more conscientious individuals, like Mr. Baines, would endure the pain of imprisonment rather than suffer the greater pain of doing that which was opposed to the dictates of their consciences? Would not that circumstance of itself lead to continued and violent conflicts regarding church-rates, and would not the temple of God be even still more frequently desecrated? He was sure that the House would not consent, and least of all the hon. baronet the Member for Oxford, to perpetuate these scenes of strife and disorder. No man with strong religious impressions—no man who was anxious to promote the cause of religion and the best interests of the Church, could be indifferent to such proceedings. He should be asked how he

proposed to remedy these evils, and whether he had found the means of preventing what he so much deprecated? His reply would be, that, in the first place, he proposed to abolish the chief ground of discontent—Church-rates. If he could establish that the Church would be able to maintain its own fabrics—that its members were sufficiently numerous and wealthy, and that they were not, and could not, be indifferent to the cause of religion—he thought the House would see the reasonableness of requiring them, like the Dissenters, to subscribe for the maintenance of the fabrics of the Church. His bill would be, to abolish Church-rates, and to empower the members of the establishment to rate themselves in respect of pews and seats, for the repair and support of the buildings in which their worship was conducted. He was aware, that there was another subject of some difficulty in connection with this question; he alluded to the situation of churches built by funds derived from mortgage. Nobody could be so wild as to wish to violate the faith of Parliament, and this point might be a fit matter for consideration by a committee. Of course where individuals had advanced money on the faith of acts of Parliament, it would be impossible to interfere with their rights, or to apply the proposed law until the money had been repaid. All he wished to do, as he had stated, was, to abolish Church-rates, and to empower the members of the Establishment to rate themselves in respect of pews and seats, and he believed, that ample funds would thus be provided for the maintenance of the fabrics of the Church. Now, in confirmation of this, he had received a letter, not from an enemy of the Church, not from an individual indifferent to its interests, but from a clergyman of the Established Church, whose name he would state, and whose communication he would read. It was signed by the rev. J. Lowry, dated from the Vicarage Burgh, by Sands, the 9th of March, 1841, and bearing the post mark of Carlisle:—

“Sir—Observing that your motion for the alteration of the present mode of providing for the repair of the fabric of churches is fixed for the 18th, I beg leave to make a very few remarks upon this subject. I can assure you, that the fact is, that in many parishes in this and the neighbouring county of Westmoreland, Church-rates, as rates, have virtually ceased and determined. In this parish I endeavoured to have a rate made, but no rate

has been made, but was resisted on principle,” (and to this part he begged the particular attention of the House,) “not as injurious to Dissenters, for here they are few, but as unjust to the farmer and occupier for the time being, and I much doubt whether ever a Church-rate can be made. No rate is made in Wigton. None, I believe, in St. Mary’s Carlisle, and I know several churches which are immeasurably inferior in comfort to dissenting chapels, and for the repairs of which the incumbent would not enforce a Church-rate contrary to the will of a large minority of his parishioners. The fact is, that the measure which was proposed by Government, and carried by a small majority of five in your House, has shaken the ancient system to its foundation, and, unless some arrangement be made, will create multitudes of dissenters, if rates are enforced by process of law. I have written the preceding as a friend to the Established Church, and I conceive, that unless some alteration be made speedily, the congregations will diminish, from discomfort and default of improvement.

“I am, Sir, yours, faithfully,

“J. LOWRY.

“J. Easthope, Esq.

“P. S. As I am a stranger, I beg to add that I am not altogether unknown by the county and city members of Cumberland and Carlisle.

“J. L.

“This letter is at your service, to use in any way you please.”

He felt that this was evidence which was not to be slighted; it was not the evidence of a dissenter, it was the evidence of a gentleman attached to the Established Church, and a member of that Church, and he gave his opinion that the interests of the Established Church would be greatly injured by this continued conflict upon Church-rates. He had received another letter from a gentleman, who might also be supposed to know something of the Established Church: it was signed by Frederic Bone, churchwarden of St. Andrew’s, Plymouth, and dated 10th of March, 1841;—

“Sir—Observing by the public papers that you are about to propose the abolition of Church-rates—permit me to enclose, for your information, a statement made two years back of our church affairs; and since that time, by the same means, we have new-roofed the church, and made many useful repairs and improvements. The parish of Charles in this town, Tavistock, Stoke near Devonport, are following our plan of a pew-rental.

“I have the honour to be, Sir,

“Your most obliged humble Servant,  
F. BONE.”

He stated, also, the mode in which they managed, by assessing pews, to obtain, not only sufficient for the repairs of the Church, but for very substantial and useful repairs, by which they had prevented a recourse to that which had been the cause of so much strife and discontent. He had also received another letter from a sincere churchman and an enemy of Church-rates, in which he stated,

"Sir—In consequence of what passed in the House of Commons during the debate on your motion respecting Mr. Baines, I take the liberty of sending you the following case, in confirmation of your statement, that 'dissenters are not alone in their feelings respecting the impost of church-rates.' In this parish (Bury Pomeroy, Devonshire) there is not a single dissenting chapel, but as the Church will not hold half the population, and is some distance from the most populous part of the parish, a chapel of ease has been built, the congregation of which pay largely for their pews; yet they are also asked to pay to a church-rate for the minor expenses of the parish church. But about a year since the vestry refused a church-rate by a majority of three to one—no dissenter being present. Many of those composing the congregation in the parish church joined those who support the chapel of ease in opposing the rate, on the grounds that it was unjust to ask those supporting the chapel of ease to pay the minor expenses of the parish church, where they had not seats, when, by putting a small pew rate on the seats in the parish church, they might do away with a church-rate entirely."

Now, he thought, that these cases were sufficient to convince the House, not only that church-rates were the cause of conflict with dissenters, who professed conscientious objections to their imposition, but that, in the opinion of Members of the established Church, they were an impost which neither agreed with their feelings, nor contributed to the welfare of the Church itself. There was another class whose feelings the House would not be inclined slightly to pass by, the opinions of the Society of Friends, who had quietly and silently submitted to this imposition from the origin of their society some two centuries since; and, although they had quietly submitted, as was their custom, to the distresses for this impost, yet it was impossible for human nature to submit as they did to such an impost without discontent; which it would neither comport with the character of the House or the advantage of the country to leave unmitigated. He would refer to a letter which he had received from a member of the

Society of Friends, which detailed some cases of fraud that had prevailed under the form of law in levying the amount of these rates. The House would recollect, that Lord Althorp had called its attention to the fact, that one objection to the continuance of church-rates in their present shape was, that a larger sum of money was collected than was required for any real benefit to the Church; and he thought, that the facts which he was about to bring before the House, in relation to the Society of Friends, would be evidence of such jobbery and robbery as the House must be desirous to avoid. The letter was dated Jubilee-place, Pontefract, 22nd 8 mo. 1840:—

"To Thomas Walton, Mayor of Pontefract: The bearer of this petition, my Friend, Thomas Thwaite, requests thy interference in the case of Ann Tatham, she having last year suffered on account of church-rates amounting to only 1s. 2½d. an exorbitant distress, and has had no account rendered to her, nor is likely to have any, as a fresh demand has been made for another church-rate for the present year; she therefore solicits thee to summon the parties who made the distress to bring an account of the proceeds of the sale of the articles, a statement of which is under, which will oblige the complainant, Ann Tatham.—Articles distrained by Charles Stephens and his assistant: one copper kettle, 2s. 6d.; one brass pan, 4s.; one coal-pan, 2s.; one warming-pan, 6s.; one toasting-fork, 3s.; one clothes-basket, 2s. 6d.; one oak dinner-tray, 3s. 6d.; one tea-tray, 2s. 6d.; one mortar and pestle, 1s. 6d.; one bright bar, 2s. 6d.—making in the whole, as valued, 30s. The effect of this petition was to procure an account of the rate and charges, which the officer makes to be exactly the sum the goods sold for, viz. 16s. 8½d. I took the affair up, and stated to the corporation, that the Act of William and Mary, the fourth, in the case of Quakers, foreseeing the extortion of constables, limits the amount of law charges to 10s for a church-rate; and after waiting for more than a year, 8s. 8½d. are ordered to be returned; but even in this case the female suffers a loss of near 22s. to pay 1s. 2½d. of church-rate."

Now, here was a system that had existed for years, which individuals occupying high stations in that House had declared ought not to go on, which justice demanded should not continue, which religion required to be remedied; and yet the House had neglected its duty to the country, by permitting it to remain. His correspondent then said, that the constable's charges were for church-rate 1s. 2½d., information and summons 6s. 6d., and copy of distress warrant 1s. 6d., and levy-

ing, sale of goods, &c. 6s. 6d., making a total of 18s. 8½d. to raise 1s. 2½d. The same individual also stated the amount of rate to be levied in six different cases, and reaching only to 22l. 0s. 5d., and the total loss experienced by individuals after payment of the 22l. 0s. 5d. by the sale of their goods, &c., was 35l. 14s. 9d., and his correspondent added :—

"It will be observed in the above cases that the charges allowed by the justices to the constable, much exceed the limit of the act of William and Mary (the 4th) to 10s. for law charges. It will be seen the church-rate for the whole amounted to 22l. 0s. 5d., and the loss sustained by law charges and sale of goods below real value make the account 35l. 14s. 9d. in the whole. This is a mild representation of the effects, because it must be observed, to the credit of the churchwardens, they had allowed several years to accumulate, which made the charge less than if demanded annually. The rate of one year is 1s. 2½d., and the loss sustained in goods amounted to 30s. until the overcharge of 8s. 2d. was returned."

Such was the system, that in the year 1834, and again in 1837, it was proposed to remedy by legislation; yet, year after year had passed by, and instead of its coming before the House under the auspices of one likely to give it full success, it was left to an individual Member, unsupported by the influence of official station. He scarcely thought, that the House would refuse to entertain the measure which he had to propose; he scarcely thought that it would determine not to give it consideration; yet he could scarcely hope that in the present circumstances of the country, and in the short remaining time of the present Session, it would be possible to accomplish the end which he earnestly desired. This, however, he confidently hoped, that another year would not be allowed to pass without the subject being taken up by her Majesty's Government, in such a form as would put an end to that conflict, to that bitterness, and to that strife, which had been over and over again proclaimed by the House, to be at variance with the justice and policy which ought to influence the Government and the Legislature of this country. He was also satisfied that the House, would not suffer the feebleness of the advocate to interfere with the importance of the question; but that it would look to the subject and the subject alone. He implored the House to give its best attention to that which he

was convinced would conduce to the peace and happiness of the country; and he made that appeal in the full reliance that, if they entertained his proposal now, even though it should not be passed, it would, at least, be the precursor to a more perfect and successful measure. He would, therefore, conclude by asking for leave to bring in a bill to abolish Church-rates, and to empower the Members of the Established Church, to levy a tax on pews and seats for the maintenance of churches.

Mr. *Goulburn* before the question was put, wished to make a suggestion upon a matter of form. The hon. Member, in the explanation of his measure, had been so short—he meant in the explanation, not the speech—that he did not exactly comprehend the measure which the hon. Member intended to propose. He looked, however, to the notice, and found that it was intended "to levy a tax on pews and seats for the maintenance of the churches," and if that were the object of the hon. Member's bill, he conceived that it came within the rule of the House, which required them to go into a Committee of the whole House, before they assented to its introduction. He would, therefore, ask the Speaker whether the present question could be put?

Mr. *Easthope* hoped that the objection of the right hon. Gentleman would not be found available. In his bill he had followed the precedent of other acts of Parliament, that had passed that House—he held one in his hand, and there were others to which, as he thought, no such rule had been applied. The act which he had, was the 2nd William 4th., c. 26, and was entitled

"An act to equalise the ecclesiastical burdens in the parish of St. Mary, Islington, in the county of Middlesex; for partially altering the rents and profits of the Stone Fields estate, within the said parish Church of St. Mary, Islington, and the Chapel of ease thereto, and for other purposes connected therewith."

He had followed the precedent set by that act, and no doubt that did not begin in a committee of the whole House.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that the operation of that act was limited to the particular parish, and it was either wholly private or partly private and partly public, and was thus under a different order: whereas the hon. Member's bill was for levying a general tax, which brought it under the ordinary rule of the House.

Mr. *Easthope* might be permitted to state, that he did not intend by his bill to make taxation imperative in every case, but only to give persons duly assembled in vestry, if they should think fit, a power to levy a tax on the pews and seats of their respective churches.

The *Speaker* observed that if it were the intention of the hon. Member to levy a general tax upon pews and seats for the maintenance and repairs of churches, he had no doubt that the course suggested by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, would be necessary, and that the House must first resolve itself into a Committee. But it appeared from the explanation which had just fallen from the hon. Member for Leicester, that it was his intention merely to give a power to the vestry in each particular parish, to levy a tax upon pews and seats for the maintenance of the parish church. In such a case it was unnecessary to proceed by a Committee of the whole House. For although the old rule of the House applied to all taxes, the practice of the House had of late years been different, and the Highway Bill, Municipal Corporation Bill, Irish Poor-law Bill, and Scotch prisons Bill, had all been introduced without a previous Committee of the whole House, being considered bills imposing taxes of an entirely local nature. Under these circumstances, he considered that the bill might very properly be brought in by motion, and that it was not necessary for the House in the first instance to resolve itself into a Committee.

The question having been put,

Viscount *Morpeth* merely rose to state, that it was not his intention upon that occasion to raise any obstacle on the part of the Government to the introduction of the bill of his hon. Friend. The principle to which her Majesty's Government were not prepared to give their acquiescence was, to leave the matter to chance or option whether the fabrics of the churches should be preserved or not. That certainly was a matter of principle from which her Majesty's Government were not prepared to recede. At the same time he was quite alive to the objections which existed against the present system, and which had been detailed with great perspicuity by his hon. Friend, the Member for Leicester, to which no one was more alive than himself. He did not, of course, al-

lude to the principle of Church-rates, but the obvious and palpable results of the present system, and to the heart-burnings and irritation which were the more prevailing and not less mischievous results. Many localities were harassed by the present mode, and he was, therefore, friendly to any well-devised substitute for the present system. The Government of Lord Grey and the Government of Lord Melbourne had each introduced a plan, but on being laid upon the Table, it did not appear to obtain that degree of acquiescence which could inspire the hope that it would lead to a satisfactory settlement. As he understood from the proposal of his hon. Friend, he did not intend, in the body of his bill, to find in all cases a substitute for the deficiency caused by the total abolition of Church-rates, he only proposed that it should be a matter of chance and option whence the funds should come; and whilst this was left to chance and option, he was not prepared to give his sanction to the total abolition of Church-rates. However, as he thought it due to the importance of the subject that every proposition for a remedy should be duly considered, as it was desirable to have some settlement of the question, and as the hon. Member himself proposed to effect some substitution for the present compulsory mode, without taking upon himself to say that the proposed substitution would be adequate in amount, or satisfactory in its application; yet, with a view of considering that question, and not conceiving that the sanction of the Government to the introduction of the bill implied any sanction to the unconditional abrogation of Church-rates, he was not prepared to object to the introduction of this bill, reserving to himself full power to give the most ample consideration to its details, and when he saw the details, to give to or withhold from, the bill itself, his assent.

Sir *R. H. Inglis* observed, that a fortnight ago the noble Lord, the Secretary of the Colonies, had said, that if the present motion were not likely to give rise to any discussion, he would not object to its being pressed at that time; but the noble Lord went further, and he stated with a full recollection of what he said on former occasions, that if the bill of the hon. Member for Leicester simply abrogated Church-rates, he would not assent to its introduction, but as he understood that

the hon. Member provided a substitute, he thought it would be fair that the hon. Member should be allowed to make his statement and introduce his measure. There was something plausible in this, and the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, might justify his assent that there was to be some definite plan suggested in the bill of the hon. Member for Leicester, which might justify his acquiescence in the other part of the measure. But he would ask any hon. Member who had been present during any part of the speech of the hon. Member, and even the noble Lord, whether they could conceal from themselves, that the utmost security which the Church and people would have for the maintenance of the fabric, would be as vain and illusory as the bitterest enemy of the Church could desire? Although he thought that the hon. Member for Leicester was wrong in his interpretation of the law, as to the assent of the vestry being necessary, yet could the noble Lord conceal from himself, that by the present bill he would be transferring the popular discretion as to the imposition of a rate on the whole property of the parish to a simple tax or impost upon pews and seats in the church? It was perfectly illusory to propose such a measure as this, for the right which the Church and the people of England had now to the maintenance of the fabrics of the churches. Yet it was because of this distinction, in what was proposed this year by the hon. Member for Leicester and that which was proposed last year by the hon. Member for Finsbury, that her Majesty's Government, forgetting not only their votes, but their speeches, now gave their assent to the present motion. He could not but recollect that every one of the Cabinet Ministers in that House voted against the bill proposed by the hon. Member for Finsbury to abolish Church-rates, whilst they now voted for a bill which abolished Church-rates, and provided a substitute as vain as the worst enemy of the Church could desire. How could they justify the course they were now taking? Not only had every one of the Cabinet Ministers voted against the bill last year proposed, but it was voted against by every one over whom the Cabinet had influence. He contended, therefore, that the question then before the House was, whether the noble Lord opposite did or did not consider the proposal of

the hon. Member for Leicester sufficient for the purpose? If he did consider it sufficient, why did he not give his full assent to the bill? if he did not, why did he permit it to be introduced, when he knew that it had no chance of attaining a second reading? He was not at liberty to attribute motives to hon. Members; but he might say, that certain measures had certain tendencies, and he contended that the assent now given to this bill would not have been given under other circumstances. It had been given under the influence of the present crisis. He was ready to listen to any reasoning against his conclusion, but the coincidence was remarkable. He knew that last year her Majesty's Government distinctly objected to a bill for the abrogation of Church-rates, and their altered conduct now must arise from their view of the crisis in which they were placed, or on the opinion that the *panacea* which the hon. Member for Leicester had proposed was sufficient to cure all the ills on which he had been making such an elaborate statement. The hon. Member had read a list of places, in which the raw material of suits in the ecclesiastical courts had been found. He (Sir R. H. Inglis) had counted those places, and he found, that out of 13,000 parishes in England, there were but fourteen in which there was found any suits; he thought, that this was sufficient evidence, that although there was excitement in particular places, it was limited to those localities, and was gradually diminishing even in those; that it was limited in its sphere, and diminishing in its activity. They had heard the hon. Member for Brighton state the gradual diminution of this hostility in the borough which he represented, and he believed that the more the law was understood, the more this hostility would decrease. With respect to the judgment of the Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, he would only observe, that he believed, that the extreme remedy was not yet exhausted; that there was a way by which the present difficulties would be overcome, and before he interfered with the Established Church, he wanted to see whether the law as it at present stood, would not be sufficient to provide for all its wants. The hon. Member for Leicester had also referred to a statement made by him (Sir R. H. Inglis), that he would not voluntarily contribute to a church, the doctrines of which

he disapproved. The power of the law to enforce some means of supporting the Church could not be questioned; and if that were so, the question was not, what was the amount which should be paid. There was no doubt, that property of all classes or descriptions was liable to pay church-rates—property, whether occupied by dissenters or not, must be always subject to some impost, subject of course, to the discretion of the vestry or of the churchwardens. The hon. Member for Leicester had read a communication from the vicar of Burgh-on-Sands, who stated, that church-rates would produce ruin to the ecclesiastical system at present established in England, for he said, that the congregations diminished. He hoped, that this was not the case, and that no such discomforts as he described, would be produced in respect of the public worship of the country—a worship which he believed was the best inheritance of the poor man. He contended that it was the duty of the House to maintain that which was the property of the nation, and not remove, by the adoption of this measure, that which was a legal impost. The effect of the proposition of the hon. Member opposite, would be to deprive the poor man of his right to enter a church at all. It would render all seats and pews liable to be taxed. [*No, no!*] If it were not so, he could only say, that it must be very different in its provisions from that which seemed to be implied by the motion of the hon. Member; for the meaning of that notice must be taken to be that the seats and pews should be taxed for the maintenance of public worship. [*Mr. Easthope*: Not all seats.] The hon. Member might make certain qualifications in his bill, but he could only judge from the notice, which seemed to say, that all pews and seats should be taxed. But he said, that when they found that the measure of the hon. Member, which the House was called upon to sanction, was not to be imperative or binding, even on those who occupied the pews and sittings, they could not but come to the conclusion, that if they adopted that measure in lieu of the present solid foundation of the Church Establishment which existed, they would accede to a mere illusory proposition, which would breakdown, as the hon. Member said, that the church-rate had failed in the fourteen places, the names of which he had quot-

ed, whenever there was sufficient excitement on the part of the dissenters to effect its destruction. For these reasons, and many others, which he still felt as strongly as he had ever done, and believing, in the first place, that even if the measure of the hon. Member were less objectionable than it was, it could not receive that consideration in the present Session which was due to the importance of the subject; and believing also that objectionable as it was, it should be resisted in every possible shape, he should give his opposition to the motion.

*Mr. Hume* said, that it had not been his intention to address the House so early in the evening upon the subject, but that he felt himself called upon to rise, in consequence of the speech of the hon. Baronet, who had just sat down. With regard to the time at which this bill had been brought in, and the object with which it had been introduced, he could assure the hon. Baronet, that he was entirely in error in the statement which he had made. That this bill should be brought in was agreed upon as long ago as the month of December. The hon. Member for Leicester and he (*Mr. Hume*) had been at Leicester in that month, and a meeting was then held, at which he had attended with the hon. Member, and which, he must say, was the most numerous and the most enthusiastic meeting of dissenters at which he had ever been present. A request had then been made to the hon. Member for Leicester to bring in a bill early in the Session, and he had been honoured by his being requested to second the proposition, and there could be no allegation, therefore, more unfounded than that which had been made by the hon. Baronet; and he hoped, that the House would no longer believe, that the introduction of the measure was in anywise attributable to any anticipation of an election. He believed, that the opinion of the Government upon this question had never varied, and he should wish to know why the opinion of the hon. Baronet had been altered. He believed, that he was correct in stating, that the hon. Baronet had voted for the abolition of Church-rates in 1834. [*Sir R. Inglis*: No, no.] He was under the impression that the hon. Baronet was one of the majority of 256, who on that occasion voted in favour of the abolition of Church-rates, in opposition to a minority of 140,



Upon that occasion, he (Mr. Hume) had voted in the minority, and he did not think that he had ever had the good fortune to be in a minority with the hon. Baronet on any Church question, and it was certainly fifty to one that the hon. Baronet had taken a view entirely different from that which he (Mr. Hume) had espoused. The hon. Baronet said, that the Church would be starved if it were called upon to support its own edifices, and he seemed to think, that the Church-rates were alone applied to the maintenance of the buildings of the Establishment. If the hon. Baronet, however, looked to the returns laid before that House, he would find, that no less than 39,382*l.* had been raised by pew rents, to be applied towards the erection of such edifices. The hon. Member for Leicester, therefore, was only extending a principle which already existed, with this difference, that his proposed measure would lay the assessment on Church-goers only; it would compel those who attended the Church to support it, instead of throwing its maintenance most unjustly on the Dissenters. He said most unjustly, for reasons which he would state to the House. Originally tithes were given to maintain the churches. Why was not that system continued, by which those funds were legitimately applied to their own proper purposes? Because they had been absorbed from such an application, and that very property which had been given for the support of the Establishment had been stolen. He contended, that the right of the Church to call for these rates, rested upon no better ground than that of the pickpocket, who put his hand into the pocket of another to take from it its contents. With regard to the maintenance of these imposts, he urged, that it was impossible that the law could support their being demanded. If it did, why, he asked, were they not paid? That they were not paid was obvious, and they amounted in effect, therefore, to a mere voluntary payment. The hon. Baronet said, that the number of disputes upon questions of Church-rates had much diminished; but was he aware of the cause of that? Those who had tried to support them had given up the attempt, and had ceased to continue those struggles in which they knew that they must be unsuccessful, and so far from the result being an acknowledgment of the impossibility of

their opposing the collection of these imposts, it was an absolute confession of the justice of that opposition to what was deemed a harsh and unjust tax. He found that the amount of repairs done was 248,000*l.*, of which 56,000*l.* was supplied by endowments, so that the whole amount which would be required to be produced by the poor unfortunate Church of England, as it was attempted to be called, was considerably under 200,000*l.* for its own support, and looking at the sums of money actually applied to the repairs of the edifices of the Establishment, and seeing, that the Dissenters were taxed not merely for those repairs, but for all the other charges of organs, books, wine, clerks' salaries, &c., it seemed to him that it was most unreasonable that they should any longer be called upon for such supplies to meet the demands of those pluralists, who appeared to think that they were entitled to receive enormous sums from them for their own maintenance only. Ireland, it was to be observed, had been relieved of her difficulties in this respect; and seeing this, and that in Scotland no Church-rates were paid, with a small exception in Edinburgh, he asked whether it was fit that the present system should be allowed to continue in England? He found, that since the year 1800, a sum of 5,678,000*l.* had been paid for the support of the Church, besides about 5,500,000*l.* in tithes. The interest of this amount alone would have been more than sufficient to maintain the edifices of the Church for ever; and he thought, therefore, that churchmen ought to be by this time ashamed of the continued reception of the money of Dissenters for this object. When Church-rates were originally granted, it was because all the population of the country were of the same religion, and there were no Dissenters; but the same state of things did not now exist, and that class which before universally prevailed being now diminished, should no longer be entitled to call upon the rest of the people to support their Church. He had prepared a statement of the real situation of the Dissenters in England, Ireland, and Scotland, in readiness for that discussion which was expected to have taken place during the last Session upon the motion of the hon. Baronet (Sir R. H. Inglis), but which he had not then been able to use. The population of Britain in 1831, was 16,589,000, of Ireland,

7,767,000. The increase in ten years was a trifle under 15 per cent.; but for the nine years elapsed since the census, taking it at 13 per cent., the result was as follows:—

England, including the army and navy . . . . .	16,100,000
Scotland . . . . .	2,640,000
Ireland . . . . .	8,776,000
	<hr/>
	27,516,000

This existing population, in respect to religion, might be classified as follows:—

	CHURCHMEN.	DISSENTERS.
In England, the Churchmen to Dissenters as 5 to 4 . . .	8,960,000	7,150,000
In Scotland, as 5 to 3 . . .	1,584,000	1,066,000
In Ireland, the exact proportion in 1834 was 1 to 9½ . . .	852,000	7,924,000
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	11,396,000	16,130,000

In the British Isles, then, the dissenters exceeded the adherents of the Church in the proportion of seven to five. He thought that this question having been already before the House, and the House having in 1834 by a majority of 116, and in 1837 by a majority of five, acceded to the general principle involved in this motion, the hon. Baronet ought not now to resist the introduction of the bill of his hon. Friend. He did not ask the hon. Baronet, to agree to the details of the measure, which might be the subject of after consideration, but he thought that the House should not resist the present proposition. Some doubts had been expressed as to the effect of the details of the bill, but he believed they would be found to be these. The hon. Baronet was aware that there were endowments in many parishes which could be applied to the repair of churches; it was proposed that wherever there was not a sufficient endowment to complete the repairs which should be requisite, the vestry should be empowered to assess those going to the churches and using the pews to such an amount, as to produce so much as should be required for the repairs. That was, he thought, a fair proposition; and at all events, he hoped that the hon. Baronet would not reject the chance which was now afforded him, of settling that cause of discord and confusion which had so long prevailed. It might be so easily removed.

Mr. *Goulburn* said, that he was afraid that if any other hon. Member rose before he had offered his sentiments to the House, he should be accused of offering a factious opposition to the principle of this

measure, because it was his intention to express the same views upon this subject as those which were entertained by the hon. Baronet. If he thought, that there was any possibility of the bill of the hon. Member for Leicester, being brought forward at any future period in the course of this Session for discussion, he might be disposed now to enter into the question fully, and to offer arguments against it; but he was sure that, under existing circumstances, the obtaining leave on the part of the hon. Member, to bring in his bill would have no further effect than the introduction of the bill, and that no other result would be produced by it beyond that popularity which he might gain with those whose views he had favoured in adopting the course he had pursued. Feeling, therefore, that it was impossible that any decision could be arrived at this Session upon this question, when there were so many others of much greater importance which had been abandoned by the Government by reason of there not being time to discuss them, while he should not oppose the introduction of the bill, he must not be supposed to give the least sanction or support to its proposed provisions. He maintained, as he ever had, that the continued support of the means of religious instruction to the people, and of the means of religious worship also, was incumbent upon us all, not only as Members of any particular faith, but as persons desirous for the maintenance of religion generally. He could show that this was as important to the Dissenter as to the member of the Church of England, but, as he had already said, this was not a time at which he felt called upon to enter into the question. With regard to the bill of the hon. Member, he must say, that he had never heard a proposition made more calculated to contradict the argument of the hon. Member himself. He said that his object was, not to lessen the religious influence of the Church of England over the different members of the Church, and that another object which he had in view was to put an end to dissensions in the various parishes of the kingdom upon the subject of Church-rates. What were the propositions of the hon. Member? First of all, he proposed that taxes should be levied on those inhabitants of a parish who went regularly to Church. The Parliament of Queen Elizabeth had laid a tax on those who did not

go to Church, but the hon. Member for Kilkenny said, that the proposition was to lay a tax on every person who was a Church-goer. The very effect of this would be to increase the influence of the Church of England, not only by securing immediate followers for it, but also by obtaining for it, as its supporters, those persons whose religious instruction was obtained through its means. "But," said the hon. Member for Leicester, "I will put an end to those discussions which take place at vestries." At present vestries had a discretion as to the appointment of Church-rates, and it was found that the Dissenters were unable to withstand the determination which existed to fix such rates. What was proposed to be done by this bill? Still to leave the power of taxing in the hands of the vestries, where it at present rested. What was the cause of dissension now? That that very power was exercised, which the hon. Member proposed still to enable them to exercise. He was anxious to reserve to himself the fullest power to oppose the second reading of the bill, and if the bill should reach that stage, he should do so upon the ground to which he had already referred, that it was to the interest of all, whether Dissenters or Churchmen, to maintain the Established Church, with its means of religious instruction, inviolate.

Mr. C. Wood was glad, that the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, had intimated his intention not to oppose the introduction of this bill, because he thought that the House ought to be in full possession of the terms of the proposition which was made, before they came to any decision; and if the measure was allowed to reach a further step, they might be able more completely to comprehend those provisions, which at present, he confessed, he did not entirely understand. He meant to give no opinion whatever now as to the bill, or whether the proposition of the hon. Member for Leicester would meet the difficulty which it was intended to remedy. But of this he was sure, that nothing was more clear than the absolute necessity of introducing some measure by which the heartburnings of a great portion of the population of this empire might be removed. It was a subject upon which it was absolutely necessary that the existing discussions should be put an end to, and he thought, that it

was the duty of the House to allow the bill to be introduced, in order that they might know what its provisions were, and whether they were properly applicable to the object in view.

Mr. Plumptre said, that he was one of those who had formed the majority in voting for the abolition of church-rates, in the year 1834, but he had voted in support of that proposition upon the distinct understanding, that some substitute for them should have been proposed. Viscount Althorp had proposed, that 250,000*l.* should be granted for the maintenance of the Church, and he had voted for the proposition only in consequence of that grant being suggested. He could not see, that in the measure of the hon. Member for Leicester, there was any substitute for church-rates provided for, but, at the same time, he was not prepared to oppose the introduction of that measure.

Dr. Lushington said, that as the introduction of this bill did not appear to be opposed on the other side of the House, many of the observations which he had intended to make to the House were superfluous and unnecessary. But he availed himself of this opportunity of expressing his thorough conviction, that it was impossible, that church-rates should continue in the state in which they now stood. Such were the doubts and the confusion which existed in point of law—such were the difficulties which daily arose, as to the application of the law—and such was the repugnance of all, in very many districts of this country, at carrying the law into execution, that he might venture to say, that when it was carried into complete effect by the force and power of authority, the serious consequences which generally arose in the continued exasperation of the people, was much to be regretted. The hon. Baronet, the Member for Oxford, had made a statement that evening, as well as on other occasions, which appeared to him to be incorrect. The hon. Baronet seemed to be of opinion, that the church-rate was, in fact, a tax upon property. In his judgment, it was no such thing. He took it that it was this; by the law, as it formerly stood, it was supposed, that every person was a member of the existing church, and the consequence was, that as no man dared to deny, that he was such a member of the church, he could not deny his right to pay rates. Those

rates, however, from the beginning, had never been levied on property, they were levied on individuals by reason of their possessing property—not by reason of their possessing real estates, but by reason of their possessing property of any sort. By the law of the land, personal estate was assessable just as much as a real estate was, and if hon. Gentlemen would look to a book called “*Reformatio Legis*” which contained a statement of what was intended to be the law at the time of the Reformation, and of what was actually now the law, they would find it laid down there, that in case the funds of the church failed, three or four persons might be selected for the purpose of taxing every person residing in the parish, not according to his estate in land—not according to the holding which he had, or according to his stock in trade, but according to the whole means which he possessed. Some twenty years ago the question had been agitated, and it was then suggested, that if that law were then maintained, it might be said, that Rundell and Bridge might be taxed according to the contents of their shop, to which the answer given was, “So they may.” It was a tax, he agreed, which had existed from time immemorial—which was perfectly legal; and whether it was to be enforced in one way or the other, and he would say nothing as to the judgment in the *Brain-tree* case; he agreed, that it was a lawful tax, and that there were means of enforcing its payment. He remembered, that twenty-six years ago, when he had first began to practise, the subject was little contested, and it was not for long after that time, that it was taken up with any seriousness. What the dissenters said, whether right or wrong, was, that the church-rate was a tax imposed upon the whole people at the time they were Catholic—that it was continued at the Reformation, though that was but a substitution of a dominant Protestant church for the Catholic church; and that when the Act of Toleration came, and dissenters from the Church were allowed freely to profess their religious sentiments, still the law was not altered, which it ought to have been, at a time when the dissenters were allowed to avow and follow their opinions without church censure or punishment. They also said, when sued and proceeded against for church-rates, that the avowed object for which they were

so proceeded against, was, to use their old formula, “their souls’ health and the correction of their manners,” but according to a religion, which had undergone an entire reformation. Such, right or wrong were the views of the Dissenters, and those views were followed up by the general opinion, that while the Church of England possessed property throughout the country, and the Dissenters received no support whatever from any such property; and while the Dissenters maintained their own Ministers, that it was most unjust to compel them to maintain the ministers of the edifices of a Church that was already supported and maintained by the public. The opinion that church-rates ought not to exist, was not confined to Dissenters, it was shared by Churchmen; and he would beg to remind the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that a late Regius professor at Oxford had felt so strongly on this head, as to have avowed in a pamphlet, published some few years ago, that he would rather give up church-rates than have to defend them. A similar opinion was very generally entertained. Another grievance, of which the Dissenters greatly complained was, that they should be called upon to contribute towards the ornament of the Church. During the discussion on church-rates in 1834, the very highest authorities on the subject laid it down as unjust to compel a man, not a member of the Church, to pay towards the maintenance of the pews, the organ, and the singers. The bench of Bishops had repudiated any wish to call on the dissenters to do this. He (Dr. Lushington) maintained, that all these grievances of the Dissenters ought to be redressed. With regard to the particular measure of relief now proposed to be brought in by his hon. Friend, the Member for Leicester, he would wish to reserve any final opinion upon it, until he had had an opportunity of considering its provisions. If the principle of the measure was to call upon those who occupied and paid for pews in the Church, and partook of the sacred rites of religion there, to contribute towards the maintenance and repair of the edifice, then he, for one, as a Member of the Church, would at once say, that such a proposition was just and right, and that a man who refused to accede to it was unfit to be a member of any church. But if the provisions of his hon.

Friend's bill should have a tendency to leave the Church unprovided with the means of maintaining and repairing the edifices, or of continuing the service as it had been accustomed to be carried on, then there would be reasons for his ultimately voting against the measure. At the present stage, however, looking at the unhappy divisions which the question had given rise to, and the bitterness of heart so contrary to the true spirit of Christianity, that it constantly produced, he for one would give his hearty assent to the introduction of the bill, hoping, that it might lead to the allaying of those discontents, while at the same time it would protect and uphold the Church itself; and convinced as he was, that the settlement of this question, so far from injuring, would benefit the Church, in proportion as it tended to uphold it in the opinions, feelings, and affections, of the people.

Mr. *Estcourt* felt it impossible to let the debate come to a conclusion without expressing his conviction, that the proposition of the hon. Member for Leicester, as far as he at present understood it, was one that must be productive of much inconvenience to the public, while it was far from being salutary to the Church. There was no intention on the part of his hon. Friends around him to resist the introduction of the measure, though he apprehended it must be manifest even to the hon. Member for Leicester himself, that it would not ultimately be agreed to by the House. He did not mean himself to oppose its introduction, but he could not allow the motion to pass without entering his protest against the principle of the measure, as explained by the hon. Member for Leicester, as he might otherwise be supposed to acquiesce in it. With reference to what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, although the right hon. Gentleman denied, that church-rates were leviable upon real property only, yet his argument established the fact, that the impost was justly due and recoverable on the property of individuals, the inhabitants of the parish. There was one other point to which he thought it necessary to advert. The hon. Member for Kilkenny had stated, that the number of dissenters in the United Kingdom was greater than that of the members of the Established Church. But the hon. Member had, in making his calculation, included the natives of Ireland

not members of the Protestant Established Church; and as no church-rates were levied in Ireland, he apprehended the hon. Gentleman was not justified in including them in a calculation applied to the present question.

Captain *Pechell* said, the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of Oxford, had spoken of the cessation of the agitation upon church-rates in the country. He should not do his duty to his constituents or to the public meeting from which that petition had emanated, which that very evening he had presented to the House, if he did not state, that there was no ground for such a proposition. That petition was signed by 4,400 persons. The hon. Baronet had spoken of the majority of persons in the town which he had the honour to represent being in favour of church-rates. But how did that appear? Because the votes upon the question of a rate being made, had been taken under Sturges Bourne's act, and the clergy had brought up ladies and infirm persons to the poll in order to do all they could to secure a majority. He congratulated the hon. Gentlemen opposite on having withdrawn their opposition to the motion of the hon. Member for Leicester.

Sir *A. Dalrymple* defended the votes taken on the question of making a church-rate as being legal, and also the character of the counter-petition which had been presented from Brighton. With regard to the public agitation upon the subject of church-rates, he confessed that he had heard great complaints, that her Majesty's Government had not carried the measure which Lord Grey's Administration proposed in 1834 for settling the question of church-rates.

Mr. *Hindley* said, it was most desirable that this question should at once be settled, and that they were under extreme obligation to the hon. Member for Leicester, for bringing the subject forward. In the parish in which he lived, the effect of the disputes about church-rates was, that the bells of the church were silenced, and the clock had been allowed to stop. This had been done by the churchwardens. There was, however, no want of liberality on the part of the parishioners. Last year, upwards of 1,000*l.* was voluntarily subscribed towards the repairs of the church—a proof, that the system of church-rates must be defective, if it led the same persons to refuse to pay the

money wrung out of their pockets. Indeed, he thought it was quite a libel on the members of the church to say, that they would not support their own church. On the contrary, he was satisfied, that if the voluntary principle were introduced into the Church, it would be found to work better than the present system.

Mr. *Easthope*, in reply, could not forbear remarking, that in what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in his opposition to this motion, he had not been very accurate in his description of the substitute which he (Mr. *Easthope*) had proposed in lieu of church-rates. He had stated distinctly, he hoped, so as to be clear to the apprehension of the House, that he proposed, that members of the Established Church should have the power of taxing themselves, as to their pews and seats, for the maintenance and repair of the churches, and nothing that he had said, could involve the consequence that the seats of the poor would be taxed.

Leave given to bring in the bill.

SCHOOL RATES.] Mr. *Slaney* moved for leave to bring in a Bill to enable the ratepayers of any parish or division of a parish, under certain circumstances, to make a School-rate of limited amount for the education of the children of the poorer classes. The great difficulty of educating the poorer classes had arisen from religious differences, and to obviate this difficulty, without attempting to introduce any larger general scheme, he proposed, that this bill should be entirely of a permissive character, and that it should apply to only rural districts; and in those rural districts where there were not persons properly qualified for, and willing to undertake the education of the poorer classes, he proposed, that, after notice, a vestry should be held, at which three-fourths or four-fifths of the parishioners should be empowered to make a rate for the purpose; and that the ratepayers should make their own regulations; but that if there were a few persons entertaining religious objections to the plan so agreed upon, they might go before a magistrate, and upon making an affidavit, stating those religious scruples, they should be excused from paying the rate.

Leave given.

POST-OFFICE COMMUNICATION WITH IRELAND. Viscount *Ingestrie* moved

for a Select Committee to inquire into the Post-Office Communication with the South of Ireland, and stated, that he did so in consequence of the changes which had taken place in the modes of conveyance since the present arrangements were made. He had understood, that almost all the letters now, since the opening of railways to Liverpool, went to the south of Ireland by Liverpool and Dublin, instead of Milford; but since the opening of the Great Western Railway a more certain and expeditious communication would be by Bristol; and he thought, it would be highly convenient if a packet were to run from Bristol to Waterford—a voyage which was accomplished upon an average, within twenty-two hours. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought it advisable, he had no objection to this inquiry being referred to the West-India mail Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he should make no objection to the appointment of the committee; but it was under the consideration of the Government to decide how far they should give up the Milford communication. It seemed to be thought, that if Milford lost it, Bristol must get it; but that was not so clear: for it was very doubtful whether it might not be convenient to drop the southern line of communication, and take that by Holyhead, or Liverpool. He preferred, that this should be a fresh committee; he wished the question to be looked into fairly; and the question of the communication between Greenock and Belfast should also be considered by the committee.

Mr. *Lucas* entirely agreed, that a fresh committee should be appointed.

Captain *Berkeley* thought, that the most convenient communication would be by Bristol.

Mr. *Shaw* said, that this subject was of great importance to Ireland. At present, the communication was not so expeditious and certain as it might be, and it was desirable, that the whole question should be considered by the committee. The great point was the selection of a port for the most direct communication between London and Dublin. He hoped some step might be taken to provide for a more quick and direct communication with the whole of Ireland.

Viscount *Ingestrie* consented to alter the terms of his motion, so as to include

the communication between Great Britain and Ireland.

Motion agreed to.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, May 27, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bill. Read a third time:—County Bridges.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of Harewood, the Earl of Cawdor, the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Stradbroke, the Duke of Wellington, the Marquess of Exeter, the Earl of Winchelsea, Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, and other noble Lords, from Yorkshire, Carmarthen, Warwickshire, Chigwell, Loughton, Hadleigh, various places in Essex, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and a great many other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By the Bishop of Lincoln, from places in his Diocese, in favour of Church Extension.—By the Earl of Rosebery, from Stirling, against any Alteration in the system of Banking in Scotland; and from a place in Stirlingshire, in favour of the Government plan relative to Timber, Sugar, and Corn.—By Lord Redesdale, from Westminster, and Matlock, against any further Grant to Maynooth; from the Southwark Protestant and Operative Association, for the Restoration of our Protestant Constitution.—By the Marquess of Downshire, and the Earl of Roden, from Portpatrick, and Fermanagh, against Lay Patronage in the Scotch Church.—By the Marquess of Bute, from the Corporation of London, in favour of the Jews Delegation Bill.—By the Bishop of London, from Bristol, against the system of Socialism; from Wethersfield (Essex), against any further Grant to Maynooth.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, May 27, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Tithe Compositions (Ireland); Sugar Duties.—Read a second time:—Clerk of the Peace; Lancaster Schools Sites; Assessed Taxes Composition; Frivolous Suits.—Read a third time:—Sewers; Felony Explanation.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Hindley, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Grote, General Sharpe, Mr. Villiers, Mr. G. Byng, Colonel Salway, Mr. O'Connell, and other hon. Members, from Buckinghamshire, Dumfries, Ayrshire, Wendover, Huntingdonshire, Ludlow, Middlesex, Dublin, Manchester, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir E. Filmer, Sergeant Jackson, Mr. Darby, Viscount Sandon, and other hon. Members, from Kent, Tipperary, Liverpool, Sussex, and other places, against a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord C. Manners, from the County of Leicester, for Church Extension.—By Lord Dalmeny, from the Town-council of Stirling, against any interference with the Scotch system of Banking.—By the Earl of Surrey, from Sussex, against the Dissolutions of the Gilbert Unions.—By Mr. Dugdale, from Birmingham, in favour of a Vote of no Confidence in Ministers.

THE WILLIAM BROWN.] Sir A. Brooke begged to ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. He wished to know if the attention of her Majesty's Ministers had been called to the circumstances connected with a most lamentable occurrence which had recently taken place. He alluded to the loss of the William Brown emigrant vessel, and if measures had been taken by her

Majesty's Government to provide in future for the recurrence of so sad a calamity, by making it compulsory on the captains or owners of all emigrant vessels to have a sufficient number of boats on board, and be otherwise provided with every means of safety, as it had been proved on the investigation which took place at Havre, that the lives of sixteen unfortunate men were sacrificed in consequence of such neglect. He also wished to know, for the satisfaction of the friends and relatives of those unfortunate sufferers, a number of whom resided in his county, if her Majesty's Government had made strict inquiry into this affair, and if they were perfectly satisfied of the justice and necessity of the course pursued on that occasion?

Mr. Labouchere said, that the vessel alluded to was not an English vessel, and interference with their regulations, however desirable, was a matter of very great difficulty. To the particular questions that had been put by the hon. Gentleman, it was obviously impossible for him to give any satisfactory answer.

Subject at an end.

MR. ASHWORTH AND SIR R. PEEL.] Mr. M. Philips hoped the forms of the House and the courtesy of the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) would permit him to put a question to the right hon. Baronet respecting a statement made by him in a recent speech, in which he was pleased to refer to a conversation which he had had with a gentleman named Ashworth, one of a deputation to the right hon. Baronet from the Chamber of Commerce in Manchester. He wished to ask the right hon. Baronet, whether he had since received any information which had led him (Sir R. Peel) to the conclusion, that the statement which he made was erroneous, especially when he had referred to a pamphlet placed in his hand by one of the deputation as one which they wished him to peruse, as expressing their opinions?

Sir R. Peel said, that he had not received any communication on the subject from any one of the parties. If he had received any direct communication from them, he would have immediately returned an answer, and if they had shown him any misstatement he had made, he should at once have corrected it. But he had not received any such communication. There were letters in public papers, but

the originals were not addressed to him. If it were wished he would state his recollection of the interview with the greatest pleasure. [*No, no.*] Then he would only say, that if he did receive any such communication, he would immediately return an answer.

#### CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTRY.]

Sir R. Peel: I shall proceed without a word of needless apology or elaborate preface to address myself to the subject of the motion of which I have given notice for this night. When on Thursday last the Chancellor of the Exchequer intimated that it was his intention to proceed with the business of the Government, I entertained a strong impression that after the defeats to which that Government had been subjected—defeats, as I thought, indicative of the withdrawal of the confidence of this House—indicative of inability on their part to give effect to measures which they deemed important for the public welfare—I did feel, I say, that after that notice, unaccompanied with the slightest explanation of Government, it was impossible for me to acquiesce in the propriety of the course proposed to be pursued, without taking some step which should bring to issue the question, whether Government do or do not possess the confidence of the House of Commons; and having come to that conclusion, I infinitely prefer bringing the question to issue in the most direct and manly manner in which the sense of the House can be taken. I might have resorted to other proceedings. I might have obstructed the course of the Government with respect to measures of great importance to the commerce and industry of the country, I might have threatened the Government with obstructions to the grant of supplies, I might have taken the milder course of submitting a proposition for the postponement of some important bill, and thus, in an indirect manner, have tested the opinion of the House; but I think it infinitely better, on the very first day the forms of the House permit, to bring, in the direct manner I now propose, under the consideration of the House of Commons the question, whether it give the present Government its confidence. The resolution which I mean to propose affirms two propositions—first, that her Majesty's Government do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the House

measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare; and secondly, that their continuance in office under such circumstances, is at variance with the spirit of the constitution. My duty is to establish those propositions, and, if I establish them, I shall have a fair right to claim the assent of the House to the resolution which I am about to move. With respect to my first proposition, that "Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the House measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare," it is unnecessary for me to offer any detailed proof of its truth. Will any man affirm, after the experience, not of one or two nights, but after a long and continuous experience—will any man affirm that Ministers possess so much of the confidence of the House of Commons as to enable them to carry measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare? I am not speaking of occasional defeats, of casual obstructions to the progress of public business, I speak of the general course of public business, of measures which have been brought forward and postponed almost without an effort to carry them,—I speak of occasions on which measures proposed by the Government have been modified in deference to the opinions of those who opposed them. I speak of their failure to carry into effect measures which they strongly recommended to the adoption of the House. I am speaking not, as I said before, of one or two failures, not of obstructions offered to the Government on its first formation; I am drawing my inference of loss of confidence from the continuous course of the Government in respect to legislation and the degree of support which Ministers have received from the House of Commons. I am speaking, of course, immediately with reference to the defeat they sustained the other night on a most important measure connected with the financial administration of the country, following other defeats which they have recently met with. Now, I say that these are complete and decisive proofs that my first proposition is correctly stated—that the Government do not possess such a degree of confidence on the part of the House of Commons as has enabled them, or will enable them, to give effect to measures which they deem important to the public welfare. If that



proposition be true—if her Majesty's Ministers do not possess the confidence of the House of Commons, then, I say, that their continuance in office is at variance with the principle and spirit of the constitution. I presume I shall hardly be asked to define what I mean by the "spirit of the constitution." I do not speak of those theories which refer to some combination of the opposing elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, each armed with defensive and offensive instruments, by which they keep each other in check. I speak only of that system of Parliamentary government which has prevailed in this country since the accession of the House of Hanover. I speak of that system which implies that the Ministers of the Crown shall have the confidence of the House of Commons. I speak of that system which has prevailed during the period when, according to the expression—the just expression of the noble Lord, whom I now see opposite to me, in his able and dispassionate Essay on the English constitution, "the centre of gravity of the State has been placed in the House of Commons." When I use the phrase, "spirit of the constitution," I speak of the system of Government which has maintained the equilibrium between monarchy and democracy—of that system of Government which has harmonised those apparently conflicting elements—of that system of Government which, by the constant yet almost unfelt interposition of slight checks, has prevented the necessity of recurring to the use of extreme instruments in the collision of antagonist powers. That is the spirit of the constitution of which I speak, and that spirit of the constitution appears to me to be violated by the continuance in office of ministers who have not the confidence of the House of Commons. My impression on that subject is confirmed by a reference to all historical precedents having analogy to this case. It is confirmed by the authority of all eminent writers, all statesmen versed in the practical administration of affairs. But my impression also receives melancholy confirmation from the actual experience of positive evils which arise when another system of Government is substituted for that which has hitherto prevailed. It is confirmed, likewise, by the course of historical precedent. I look to the period which all constitutional writers have referred to as the period from which dates

the necessary system of Parliamentary Government, to the accession of the house of Hanover, to the appointment of Sir Robert Walpole as Prime Minister, and I say that, recurring to the history of Administrations, we find that invariably, or at least with scarcely an exception, that a Minister, whatever might have been his power, however confirmed his influence, however long the duration of his authority, when deprived of the confidence of the House of Commons, has felt it incumbent upon him to do homage to the principle of representative Government, and to abdicate his functions as Minister of the Crown. I begin with Sir Robert Walpole. He held office for, I think, the long period of twenty-five years. If I mistake not, he was appointed in 1715, and the termination of his power took place about 100 years from the period at which I am now speaking, namely, in 1741. Sir R. Walpole was dispossessed of power under these circumstances:—A motion was made by Mr. Pulteney, which implied the withdrawal of the confidence of the House of Commons. That motion was negatived in favour of Ministers by a majority of three; but upon Sir R. Walpole being in a minority on the Chippenham election (the determination of election questions was then exclusively influenced by party spirit, and they were looked upon as convenient modes of testing the strength of ministries), notwithstanding the slight majority which he had on the question of confidence, Sir R. Walpole relinquished office, after having been Minister for twenty-five years. In 1782 Lord North yielded to the same influence. In that year two motions were submitted to the House of Commons. The first was brought forward by Sir John Rouse, and the second by Lord George Cavendish. One motion declared that it was impossible for the House to place confidence in the Government, and the other was couched in terms very nearly similar. One was negatived by a majority of nine, the other by a majority of ten; but Lord North, nevertheless, yielded to the necessity implied by the withdrawal of the confidence of the House of Commons; and his authority also came to an end. In 1804, Lord Sidmouth retired from office, although he had in his favour a majority which has been almost unknown in the recent history of Parliamentary contests. Lord Sidmouth in the course of his administration

considered the question to be a very improper one.

*Sir R. Peel:* I never thought of complaining of any want of courtesy on the part of the right hon. Baronet. I never thought that the right hon. Baronet proposed the question in an offensively hostile manner, and if I had supposed so, I would not have alluded to the circumstance on this occasion. The opinion which the right hon. Baronet implied by his question was entirely confirmed by the House of Commons. Lord Brougham in vain attempted to appease the impatience of the House of Commons on that night, and my own opinion so strongly concurred with that implied by the right hon. Baronet's question, that, on the next day, I signified to the Crown my intention to withdraw from its service. On the night after the right hon. Baronet put his question, which never excited an angry feeling in my mind, Mr. Brougham suggested that, after what had taken place, it would be better to permit the Ministers of the Crown to have some time for deliberation, and, considering the position in which they were placed, proposed that the appointment of the committee, which it was wished should take place immediately, should be deferred till the next day. His advice, however, was overruled; and such was the impatience of the House of Commons to proceed to some decisive act which should imply the downfall of the Government, that, on that very night, the select committee on the Civil-list was appointed. The next administration which also yielded to public opinion, as signified by that of the House of Commons, was that over which I myself presided for a short time in 1835. I did carry on, for a short time, an unequal contest in opposition to the power leagued against me; but this I must say, that the first time I was positively obstructed in an act of legislation, that moment I felt it my duty to withdraw from the management of public affairs. I beg to remind the noble Lord, that at a much earlier period than the date of my resignation, he implied an opinion that I was holding power injuriously to the public interests, because I did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons. On the 2nd of March the noble Lord observed, that he believed no Ministry ever stood before, in respect to the House of Commons, in so extraordinary a position; and the noble Lord observed on the evil influence which

considered the question to be a great extension in that which had been reduced to, I considered a majority of the House of Commons, as indicative of the confidence of the House of Commons. In 1812, on the first resignation of Lord Liverpool's Government the House of Commons, on the resignation of Lord Wharncliffe (then Mr. Stuart Wortley), by a majority of four passed a resolution expressing an opinion that a more efficient administration ought to be formed. That majority of four was decisive of the fate of the first administration attempted to be formed by Lord Liverpool. He and his colleagues resigned their trust into the hands of the Sovereign, and it was not until attempts which proved ineffectual had been made to form another administration, that Lord Liverpool was again placed in office. The next administration which yielded to the influence of public opinion, as expressed by the House of Commons, was that which was presided over by my noble Friend the Duke of Wellington. In 1830, on the meeting of Parliament upon the question whether or not the Civil-list should be referred to a committee of the House of Commons, we were defeated by a combination of parties entertaining opposite opinions, and the House of Commons resolved by a majority of, I think, twenty-nine, to refer the consideration of the Civil-list to a select committee. I felt that the minority in which the Government had been left was decisive of its fate. I thought it sufficiently significant of the fact that we had not the confidence of the House of Commons; and therefore the Duke of Wellington and myself felt it our duty to retire from office. The right hon. Baronet opposite, the President of the Board of Control, will recollect that upon that occasion his opinion anticipated ours. Immediately after the decision, the right hon. Baronet, entertaining an opinion which was just and natural, and which was in conformity with that of many others, enquired from me, "whether, after such an expression of opinion on the part of the House, it was the intention of Ministers to retain their places and continue to carry on the Government."

*Sir J. C. Hobhouse:* Since that period I made an apology to the House, and the right hon. Gentleman, for having put that question, and said, that I

considered the question to be a very improper one.

*Sir R. Peel:* I never thought of complaining of any want of courtesy on the part of the right hon. Baronet. I never thought that the right hon. Baronet proposed the question in an offensively hostile manner, and if I had supposed so, I would not have alluded to the circumstance on this occasion. The opinion which the right hon. Baronet implied by his question was entirely confirmed by the House of Commons. Lord Brougham in vain attempted to appease the impatience of the House of Commons on that night, and my own opinion so strongly concurred with that implied by the right hon. Baronet's question, that, on the next day, I signified to the Crown my intention to withdraw from its service. On the night after the right hon. Baronet put his question, which never excited an angry feeling in my mind, Mr. Brougham suggested that, after what had taken place, it would be better to permit the Ministers of the Crown to have some time for deliberation, and, considering the position in which they were placed, proposed that the appointment of the committee, which it was wished should take place immediately, should be deferred till the next day. His advice, however, was overruled; and such was the impatience of the House of Commons to proceed to some decisive act which should imply the downfall of the Government, that, on that very night, the select committee on the Civil-list was appointed. The next administration which also yielded to public opinion, as signified by that of the House of Commons, was that over which I myself presided for a short time in 1835. I did carry on, for a short time, an unequal contest in opposition to the power leagued against me; but this I must say, that the first time I was positively obstructed in an act of legislation, that moment I felt it my duty to withdraw from the management of public affairs. I beg to remind the noble Lord, that at a much earlier period than the date of my resignation, he implied an opinion that I was holding power injuriously to the public interests, because I did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons. On the 2nd of March the noble Lord observed, that he believed no Ministry ever stood before, in respect to the House of Commons, in so extraordinary a position; and the noble Lord observed on the evil influence which

my attempt might have upon public affairs. On the 16th of March, the noble Lord said—

“I own I come more and more to the opinion that we ought to revert, whenever we can to that old practice of the constitution, under which the powers of the Crown were administered and exercised by persons in whom the House and the country had confidence.”

The noble Lord said, that while persons exercised the powers of the Crown in whom the House reposed no confidence, they imposed the necessity of making motions most inconvenient, and, perhaps, unconstitutional, such as that which had been made relative to the appointment of a noble Friend of mine to an embassy at St. Petersburg. The noble Lord said—

“You, by remaining in power, are contravening the principles of representative government, and you alone are responsible for the delays and obstructions that may arise, or for any offence to which, by your acts, the Crown is exposed.”

The noble Lord was then, day by day, waxing stronger in the opinion, that we ought to revert to the old practice of the constitution.

So little did I think that I had cause of personal offence in the remark made in 1830, that in 1835 I myself shared the opinion of the noble Lord. In 1835 the right hon. Gentleman opposite told me that the fault and difficulty of my position did not rest with the opposition, but from an act which would be the fruitful source of evils, namely, the endeavour to govern by a minority; and being, therefore, fully sensible of the difficulties of my position, so soon as the noble Lord had carried a resolution which implied that no adjustment of the tithes would be satisfactory, except that which he advocated, I did not wait for the progress of the bill, for I thought, that the resolution indicated, that I did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons; and, therefore, being obstructed in the progress of important legislation, although I had remained in office after having been defeated on the amendment to the address, and on the choice of a Speaker; yet, being as I have said, obstructed in the progress of important legislation, I at once signified my intention of resigning office. In speaking of administrations which have yielded to the authority of the House of Commons, I have omitted to mention a case in which

the precedent appears at first sight to be somewhat different. I mean in 1783, when Mr. Pitt, notwithstanding the adverse votes of the House of Commons, remained in office, and continued to hold office, until he could take the sense of the people by a dissolution. But I contend, that the circumstances of that case were in no degree analogous to the present. The circumstances of the contest between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox in 1783, were these:—On December 17, 1783, the bill which had been brought in by Mr. Fox, for the regulation and management of Affairs in India, was rejected. On the 17th of December, the very same day, the House of Commons resolved to go into a committee of the whole House on the state of the nation on the Monday following. On the 19th of December, the Government of Mr. Fox and Lord North was dissolved. [Mr. Macaulay: Dismissed, you mean.]—I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman, but I really thought, when a Government had been dismissed, it might be said to be dissolved. On the 19th of December, Mr. Pitt was appointed Minister. But before Mr. Pitt could take his place as Minister in the House of Commons, an address to the Crown was moved not to dissolve Parliament. At the outset of the Government, before even there was time for the re-election of Mr. Pitt, his seat being vacated by the acceptance of office, an address to the Crown was moved not to dissolve Parliament, and his Majesty was “earnestly entreated to hearken to the advice of his faithful Commons, and not to the secret advice of particular persons who might have private interests of their own, separate from the true interests of his Majesty and his people.” An adjournment of Parliament took place on December 24th. Parliament re-assembled on the 12th of January, 1784, and before any one act of the Government could be submitted to the consideration of the House of Commons, on the very day on which Mr. Pitt appeared to the House as Minister of the Crown, on the very first day, a resolution of the House was come to, moved by Lord Surrey, as follows:—

“That in the present state of his Majesty’s dominions, it is peculiarly necessary, that there should be an administration which has the confidence of this House and the public.”

On the 16th of January, four days af-

ter the meeting of Parliament, it was moved by Lord Charles Spencer:—

“That the appointments of his Majesty’s present Ministers were accompanied by circumstances new and extraordinary, and such as do not conciliate or engage the confidence of this House; and that the continuance of the present Ministers in trusts of the highest importance and responsibility, is contrary to constitutional principles, and injurious to the interests of his Majesty and the people.”

The objection to the continuance of Mr. Pitt, was not that the confidence of the House of Commons was withheld from the measures which he proposed. There were surmises—there were allegations that Mr. Pitt owed his power to the exercise of undue influence; that the King’s name had been made use of for the purpose of influencing elections. The objection, therefore, was taken at the outset to the administration of Mr. Pitt. Before Mr. Pitt could take his seat, hostile resolutions were come to; and before he could bring forward any one act of Government upon which the sense of the House of Commons could be taken, resolutions were affirmed implying objections, not to acts of that Government, but to the principle upon which it was constituted. The battles which Mr. Pitt was then fighting was not in opposition to the principle that a Minister ought to have the confidence of the House of Commons for the purpose of carrying on the Government, but Mr. Pitt contended that Mr. Fox, having a majority in the House of Commons, was attempting to control the constitutional prerogative of the Crown, and, without reference to attempts at legislation, without reference to public acts of the Government, was denouncing that Administration, and implying beforehand want of confidence in it. It is true, that there were in that case repeated resolutions implying a want of confidence on the part of the House of Commons, but I say, that the circumstances of that case are not analogous. They did not, in the case of Mr. Pitt, imply a want of confidence on account of the acts proposed by the Government. They implied a want of confidence on account of the suspicion that it owed its origin to unconstitutional motives; and that it was the duty of the House of Commons from the first to dissent from and reprobate its appointment. On this principle it was, that the great contest took place in 1783-4, which led to the dissolution of that Parlia-

ment, and the election of a new one. But is the present, I ask, a case at all analogous? Am I obstructing the course of a Government at its first formation? Am I depriving it of the opportunity of submitting its measures to the consideration of Parliament? Am I not urging that you have had the opportunity in repeated Sessions of laying before the House of Commons the measures you think essential to the public welfare, while they have been in some cases so modified, so altered by the prevailing influence of those in opposition—in other cases have so completely failed, having met with so little support either in their principle or details, that the long-continued experience of your weakness is the foundation of the resolution which I move? I say, then, that constitutional precedent, that the records of history, with one exception, and that the case of ’83, not analogous to the present, support my proposition—that Ministers not possessing the confidence of the House of Commons have felt it their duty to relinquish office. I say again, that the authority of public men and public writers comes in aid of historical precedent. The authority of Mr. Burke, the authority of Mr. Fox, the authority at least of all who have advocated the popular principles of representative Government, are in unison with my opinions on this point, and confirm the position I have laid down. Take the opinions of Mr. Burke. Mr. Burke, on the motion relative to the speech from the throne, said:—

“A House of Commons respected by his Ministers is essential to his Majesty’s service. It is fit that they should yield to Parliament, and not that Parliament should be new modelled until it is fitted to their purposes. If our authority is only to be held up when we coincide in opinion with his Majesty’s advisers, but is to be set at nought the moment it differs from them, the House of Commons will sink into a mere appendage of administration, and will lose that independent character which, inseparably connecting honour and reputation with the acts of this House, enables us to afford a real, effective, and substantial support to his Government. It is the difference shown to our opinion, when we dissent from the servants of the Crown, which alone can give authority to the proceedings of this House when it concurs with their measures.”

That was the opinion of Mr. Burke. What was the opinion of Mr. Fox? He said:—

“That it was true, that the most solid and

incontrovertible basis upon which a Government could be built, was the confidence of the House of Commons. He meant, that cordiality and union, that constituted the spring of the House of Commons; and it was the confidence in the House of Commons which gave energy and effect to every administration. However disagreeable the issue, it must be imputed to those who thought themselves wiser than the House of Commons, and they alone must answer for it."

But did Mr. Fox say, it was the duty of a Minister never to differ from the House of Commons? Did he not, on the contrary, arrogate to himself the right of proposing measures he deemed necessary for the public welfare, notwithstanding the adverse opinion of the House? He said:

"He was far from meaning, that a Minister was never justifiable in differing from the House of Commons. No man was more likely so to differ than himself; but he would adhere to his own opinion, and when he found that the House differed from himself he would resign, and say to the House of Commons—'Choose some other instrument to carry on the public business; I am no longer fit to serve you.'"

Such were the opinions of Mr. Burke and Mr. Fox. I will now refer to another high constitutional authority—no other than the noble Lord himself, as expressed in that work to which I have before referred, and now refer again with the most sincere respect, as containing a most moderate, dispassionate, and able view of the British Constitution. The passage I am about to quote, be it remembered, is no hasty expression, uttered by the noble Lord during the heat and excitement of debate, it is the calm and deliberate opinion of the noble Lord, delivered in his character of a writer on the constitution of the country, upon the relative position of the Crown and the House of Commons. The noble Lord says:—

"The accession of George 1st was the era when Government by party was fully established in England. During the reign of William, Whigs and Tories had been employed together by the King; and although the distinction of a Whig Ministry and a Tory Ministry were more decidedly marked during the reign of Anne, yet Marlborough and Godolphin, who formed great part of the strength of the Whig Ministry, were Tories; and Harley and St. John, who put themselves at the head of the Tory Administration, had held, a short time before, subordinate offices under the Whigs. But the complete downfall of the Tory Administration, who had signed the peace of Utrecht, and the well-founded

suspicion, which attached to the whole party of favouring the claims of James 2nd's son, placed George 1st entirely in the hands of the Whigs. At the same period, the financial difficulties which followed the winding up of the war, and the great practical talents of Walpole as a statesman, contributed to give a greater importance to the House of Commons than ever, and to place within that House, if I may so express myself, the centre of gravity of the State. From the doctrine of the responsibility of Ministers it follows, that they ought to enjoy the confidence of the Commons, otherwise their measures will be thwarted, their promises will be distrusted, and, finding all their steps obstructed, their efforts will be directed to the overthrow of the constitution."

The noble Lord says, that "from the doctrine of the responsibility of Ministers it follows that they ought to enjoy the confidence of the House of Commons;" and he justly describes, in powerful language, the consequences which would follow from departing from the constitutional rule. He says:—

"Otherwise their measures will be thwarted their promises will be distrusted, and, finding all their steps obstructed, their efforts will be directed to the overthrow of the constitution."

Now, although the noble Lord is in office, yet I will not take so extreme a view as he has taken of the consequences of persevering in such a course. It may not follow, that the Ministers being obstructed will meditate "the overthrow of the Constitution," but those other evils, that the noble Lord has spoken of must necessarily and inevitably follow, as the consequences of endeavouring to govern by a minority in the House of Commons. You cannot, in this country restrict the influence of party. You may say, "why meet this Government by party opposition." Why not lend them your cordial and hearty support, without reference to their merits, and thus enable them to go on. Why, the noble Lord himself has properly scouted such doctrines. The noble Lord said:—

"From the collisions of party arise the energy and vital principle of the constitution, and of popular government. (The noble Lord added) I never find any persons denouncing these party animosities and conflicts, except mock philosophers, effeminate men, and sentimental women."

The natural and unavoidable consequences of attempting to govern by a minority were the consequences I met with. Upon almost every night my pro-

ceedings were obstructed. On every committee of supply, I met with some motion which prevented my proceeding with the public business; and at length I was compelled to yield. While party influence and party connections remain in this country, such will be the case; but this I will say, of all Administrations that ever existed, considering the relative position of minorities or majorities, whichever it may be, never Government met with less obstruction than the present. Never Government had less of factious or mere petulant opposition. Without encouraging extravagant apprehensions then as to the overthrow of the constitution, this, I say, that practical experience proves to us, that the noble Lord is right, that there will be great evils, absolute, unavoidable evils, in the administration of public affairs, resulting from the inversion of the constitutional rule, and the attempt to govern without a sufficient majority in this House. Look at the noble Lord's experience in the administration of affairs since he held office. Let me take the present Parliament, let me instance three measures—one in its commencement, one in its maturity, and a more recent one supposed to be towards its close. First of all, let me take the history of the appropriation clause, then the Jamaica Bill, and lastly, the case of the sugar duties: and can I see what has taken place on these three questions without coming to the conclusion that the authority of the House of Commons is not supported by the course which has been pursued? I never taunted the noble Lord for abandoning the appropriation clause. I thought he was placed in a situation of necessity, which upon the whole made it advisable for the public interests that there should be a settlement of the tithe question without the appropriation clause, but can I conceal from myself, that this necessity arose out of the weakness of the Government—that it arose out of a want of confidence on the part of the House of Commons, which left to the Government no other alternative but to recede from the most express engagement, or, by insisting on that engagement to sacrifice great public interests? Then, look to the Jamaica Bill. Do I want the most conclusive proof of the evil consequences likely to arise upon that question on account of its abandonment by the Government? The Government brought in a

bill, the object of which was to extinguish representative Government in the colony of Jamaica. It failed. We opposed them. They were compelled to bring in another bill in conformity with our recommendations. But what was the statement of the evils anticipated from that course by the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the noble Viscount, at the head of the Government? The noble Lord opposite said:—

“It is obvious, that in Jamaica the authority of the Crown will be greatly weakened by any vote of the House of Commons giving support to the contumacy of the Assembly of Jamaica against the proposition of the Ministers of the Crown. (He said.) In continuing in the administration of affairs, not having a sufficient degree of confidence and support to carry on those affairs efficiently in this House, we should be exposing to jeopardy the colonies of this country.”

Lord Melbourne said:—

“The Jamaica Bill was of paramount indispensable importance, for the great objects of emancipation, and the vote of the House of Commons was fatal to that measure. Not only so, but it indicates with sufficient clearness and distinctness, such a want of confidence on the part of a great body in the other House, as to render it absolutely impossible that we should continue to administer the affairs of her Majesty's Government in a manner useful and beneficial to the country.”

That is the opinion which you yourselves give as to the degree in which the colonial interests were to be compromised by the attempt to govern without a sufficient majority in the House of Commons. Take, again, the case of the sugar duties. Can you, or can any man, say, that the position of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a satisfactory or becoming position? After the grounds on which that measure had been advocated—after the importance which had been attached to it—after the expectations of relief which were held out in consequence of its adoption—was it a course calculated to exalt the authority of the House of Commons to find the Chancellor of the Exchequer on Thursday last, having been overruled in his propositions, after the declaration of the Judge Advocate, that we must consider the Budget as a whole—was it becoming in the Chancellor of the Exchequer to move without a word of explanation the adoption of the existing sugar duties? I say that those measures to which I have referred, and which are but specimens

and examples, are conclusive proofs that the evils which the noble Lord prophetically anticipated, as arising from the thwarting and obstruction of the Government, have been practically realized, as we ourselves have had the opportunity of observing. Is this for the credit of the House of Commons? Is this for the maintenance of its authority as one of the constituent branches of the Legislature? Alas! no. It may appear to a superficial observer, that it is a proof of the strength of the prerogative of the Crown, that it should be able to support its Ministers without a majority of the House of Commons. But that is an imperfect and mistaken view. The interests of the Crown and the interests of the House of Commons are identical. You cannot strike a blow at the House of Commons in its just and legitimate authority, without, at the same time, striking a blow at the monarchy of this country. But can it be said to add to the authority of the monarchy, that its Ministers and Representatives, who counsel measures in this House on the authority of the Crown? Can it be supposed that the sorry triumph of being maintained in power by the Crown is a compensation for the delays, for the spectacle of insufficiency and want of authority in the Government we have recently beheld? It may be said, "True, we may not have the confidence of the House of Commons, but, perhaps, as Mr. Pitt was able to say, though Mr. Fox denied it, if we fail in the House of Commons, there are sufficient indications that we possess the confidence of the country. First, however, I should say with Mr. Fox, it is dangerous to admit any other recognised organ of public opinion than the House of Commons. It is dangerous to set up the implied or supposed opinions of constituencies against their declared and authorized organ, the House of Commons. The House and the constituencies should not be brought into this unseemly contest. But if you deny the force of that argument—if you hold that it is right to refer to the opinions of the constituencies—can you, I ask, show me, in the elections that have recently taken place, any just ground for the boast that the confidence withheld from you by the House has been extended to you by the constituencies of the empire? I know not exactly how many vacancies have occurred since the commencement of the

present Parliament; I believe them to have been upwards of one hundred, but this I can say with confidence, that upon the general balance there have been twenty elections in which there have been changes of the former Members, and of those twenty, embracing large towns, boroughs, agricultural districts, in fact, every kind and description of constituency, out of those twenty in which changes have taken place, sixteen have been averse to you, and four only have been in your favour. So that upon the whole in those places where changes have taken place during the present Parliament there has been a positive loss of not less than twelve Members. I say, then, whatever may be the object you expect from an appeal to the people, if that be the course you are meditating, you have no right to say from the result of the elections hitherto, that the opinion of the constituencies differs from that of their representatives. I know it will be said, that all my general doctrines may be true—that it is right under ordinary circumstances, that Ministers should have the confidence of the House of Commons; "but there are special and peculiar circumstances," her Majesty's Ministers might say, "that except us from the ordinary rule, and entitle us to continue in office." Now, it is perfectly obvious that this plea will apply in fact to all times. Who can deny, that in the important position of this country, with such complicated affairs to be administered, there must be at all times special and peculiar circumstances connected with the Executive Government of the day, and that you (the Government), being the judges, will be enabled to discover special and peculiar circumstances, why you should be exempted from the ordinary principle, so that, in fact, there will be no limit to the application of that principle? The men who have to determine are not quite impartial judges as to the urgency of the circumstances which constitute the special case. Perhaps, however, it may be said that you contemplate an appeal to the people, and that you are holding office for the purpose of making that appeal. I know nothing whatever upon that subject. As a Member of the House of Commons, I can have no evidence of the intentions of the Crown. But I see you repeatedly in minorities; I see indications that you have not the confidence of this House. I know

that you have power, at any time, to dissolve—I know, too, that you can choose the most favourable time for a dissolution. No doubt that is the prerogative of the Crown, a prerogative of a delicate nature for the House of Commons to meddle with. But all this does not relieve me from the performance of what I conceive to be a duty in calling upon the House of Commons to say, if her Majesty's Government possess their confidence or not. And here, too, I will say, that I shall have no additional confidence if, after exciting the public mind upon such a subject as the sustenance of the people, you then make your appeal to the country by a dissolution. I believe that you are not, by that course, advancing the measure which you advocate. I do not under-rate the power of clamour. I do not underrate the evils arising out of the conflict of opposing parties. I do doubt your power to carry that law, as I doubt your power to carry a proposal of a shilling a bushel fixed duty. Although I have no right to anticipate the decision of the House upon the Corn-law, but I appeal to any rational man whether he does not concur with me in this conclusion, that you are bringing forward your measure without a hope of being able to carry it, or of procuring the assent of the present House of Commons to your proposition; that you bring it forward (I will not say with the purpose, but the certain effect of your proceeding will be) to produce, by the increased agitation of the public mind, an indisposition to look at any settlement of the question. Nevertheless, you may say, you conceal your intentions with respect to a dissolution, and that, after taking a debate on the Corn-laws, you reserve to yourselves the power of appealing to the people. I disregard that consideration altogether, as a reason why I should not bring forward the present motion, and I am fortified in this conclusion by the course which you yourselves took with respect to a measure scarcely less important than that of the Corn-laws—I allude to the bill relative to the Poor-laws. You propose, without having, as I think, sufficient authority as a Government, to submit to the consideration of the House an important measure on the subject of the Corn-laws; and yet you, at the same time, notify your intention not to proceed with the consideration of another measure connected with the Poor-

laws of the country which you profess to think of essential importance. And on what ground do you withhold this measure from the consideration of the House? I have your own authority—a statement from your own mouth—as to the grounds on which you withhold from discussion in the House of Commons the question of the Poor-laws, which you professed to regard as one of paramount importance. The noble Lord opposite stated, that “in the present state of affairs, he thought it better not to proceed with the Poor-law Amendment Bill;” and on what ground? “In the first place,” said the noble Lord, “there would be a protracted discussion without any final result.” That is the ground which you urged to the House of Commons as a reason for withdrawing from its cognizance the question of the Poor-laws — “a protracted discussion without any final result.” If this is your anticipation with respect to the Poor-laws, may I not venture on a similar anticipation as to the Corn-laws? If I deviate from strict form—if I am unobservant of technicalities in anticipating a discussion on the Corn-laws, do not you fall in the same error in making prophecies in respect to a discussion on the Poor-laws? You think that that is a legitimate ground of action—you expect that there will be long discussion without final result on the Poor-laws—I anticipate the same with respect to the Corn-laws. Nay, you proceeded to prophecy—

“In the next place, with the expectation that every hon. Member seemed to have, that he was to account for his conduct on the hustings.”

The noble Lord opposite, thought “there would be a great many motions, and a great many speeches made, intended rather for the hustings than for any useful purpose of legislation.” The Poor-law Bill, then, was stated to be withdrawn, not on account of the unpopularity of the measure, not because its discussion in the House of Commons might inconvenience Members at an election, but on the ground, “that there would be long discussions without any final result; and “Members would make speeches rather for the hustings than for any useful purposes of legislation.” This was the ground on which the Poor-law Bill was abandoned; but the Corn-law question is to be persevered in. Is there any more prospect of a final result from the discussion of this subject? Is



there less expectation of long speeches—any greater reason to anticipate that the speeches delivered will be spoken more with a view of convincing the judgments of hon. Members in this House, than for the purpose of conciliating the favour of the constituencies whom the speakers might represent in agricultural or manufacturing districts?

I have been given to understand—but I can scarcely believe it—that her Majesty's Government, in proposing an alteration of the Corn-laws for the consideration of the House, intend, when the result of the discussion is known, to appeal to the people. If an appeal to the country be made on such a question, so far from tending in the slightest degree to remedy the depression of trade, and to calm the agitation and increase confidence in the public mind, it will, according to my firm belief, only serve, by suspending the operation of all the ordinary retail dealings of this metropolis—by leaving in a state of uncertainty for months to come what the ultimate decision of the House of Commons would be on the subject of the Corn-laws, to aggravate the evils already connected with the stagnation of commerce, and throw an effectual obstacle and impediment in the way of the revival of its prosperity. And, therefore, as I said before, if I had the perfect assurance—which you cannot give me—that it is your intention to bring forward a discussion on the Corn-laws, so far from that being a reason why I should not press my motion to a division, I should regard it only as an additional ground for doing so.

There are many other reasons, which I might state as a justification of my present motion, but I do not intend to enter on them. I rest my proposition to-night on constitutional grounds. I think I have sufficiently proved that "Her Majesty's Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons, and their continuance in office, under such circumstances, is at variance with the spirit of the constitution." I reserve all other grounds. I have a want of confidence in them, on account of their administration of the finances of the country. I think that our embarrassment, with respect to the finances, mainly arises from the same cause as has brought on the general embarrassment of the country—the attempt on the part of the Ministers to administer the Government without possessing the

confidence of the House of Commons. I do not believe, if they had possessed the confidence of the House of Commons, that they would, in the face of an increasing expenditure—in the face of an increasing deficiency (not of a decreasing revenue, comparing the expenditure with the revenue)—I do not believe that they would have incurred the risk, nay encountered the certain evil, of losing 1,200,000*l.* of revenue by the Post-office Bill. I believe that it was the same cause which led you to abandon that Post-office revenue as induces you to have recourse to the expedient to which you have now resorted.

Your weakness is the cause. I believe your weakness is the cause of your constant oscillations between Conservative opinions on this side of the House, and antagonist opinions on the other. You found it necessary to conduct the Government on Conservative principles; and in making the attempt you encountered the opposition and forfeited the confidence of Gentlemen on your own side of the House. It became necessary for you to re-establish yourselves in their opinion; and you discovered that some measure must be had recourse to, like that of the Post-office Bill, for the purpose of recovering their favourable opinion. When was it that the Post-office Bill was introduced? After your failure on the Jamaica Bill. I cannot dive into your intentions—these things may not stand in the relation of cause and effect; but it was a remarkable circumstance that, after your defeat on the colonial question, you did resort to that measure which I deprecated at the time and opposed; not that I denied that advantages might arise in many respects from the reduction of the Post-office duty, but because I thought we could not afford to hazard a revenue of 1,600,000*l.*, and because I did not believe that your resolution, that "you would supply the deficiency by increased taxation," would be listened to with any great favour. I do believe it is the same cause now—your weakness—which has impelled you to propose a budget which has only had the effect of disturbing the country. When you say that your object in proposing these measures is to supply the deficiency in the revenue, you do not explain to us how that hope is to be fulfilled. The Chancellor of the Exchequer never explained to us whether he expected to

recover the 1,400,000*l.* or 1,600,000*l.* lost in the Post-office, by the imposition of a fixed duty upon corn. It is necessary that that point should be explained, for unless the admission of foreign corn at a fixed duty of 1*s.* per bushel, will secure a revenue of 1,600,000*l.*, the Budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer is worth nothing—literally worth nothing at all. [It was intimated that the calculation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to raise only 400,000*l.* from the admission of foreign corn.] I understand the calculation to be 1,600,000*l.* but whether it were so calculated or not, it is plain that the revenue derived from the admission of foreign corn must be at least equal to that sum, if the deficiency in the revenue is to be supplied; for as the Chancellor of the Exchequer estimates the amount of the Customs for the present year at the same amount as the Customs of last year, and as 1,100,000*l.* or 1,200,000*l.* of the Customs' revenue of last year, was derived from the admission of corn, it is clear that his calculation, to be just, must be upon the anticipation of deriving somewhere about 1,600,000*l.* from the admission of foreign corn in the present year. Now, with respect to the duties on timber. I have seen an answer returned by Lord Sydenham to a deputation which waited upon him on this subject; what does Lord Sydenham say? I have no official information on the subject. [An observation was made by Lord John Russell.] Surely the noble Lord does not mean to draw a distinction between a private letter written by him, saying "we are going to bring forward the timber duties," and an official despatch in which the same intelligence was conveyed in a more formal manner. Surely the noble Lord will not insist upon the distinction to be drawn between an intimation made upon large paper and one made upon small paper—the one being marked "private," the other bearing upon its cover the stamp of official business. But Lord Sydenham says, that if the Government should bring forward the timber duties, it will be his imperative duty to urge that due regard be had to all existing interests, and that ample time be given to vested interests to dispose of them, and to provide for the transfer of their property to some other branches of trade. If that be the case—if that imperative duty be imposed upon Lord Sydenham—will it be possible to

realise, in the course of the present year, the revenue you anticipate from an alteration of timber duties? But it is not my intention to enter into detail. I reserve altogether my opinion upon this and other measures of administration. I reserve altogether my opinion upon China. I will only say, that upon that question I can give you no confidence. I cannot conceive a position more fraught with anxiety as to the moral influence of England, not only in China, but throughout the whole of the Indian empire, than that which we now occupy, as far as our present information goes, in that quarter of the world. Upon other great questions, such as our relation with America, and with France, I retain the opinions I have previously expressed. I have viewed our alienation from France with feelings of deep regret, and without entering further into the subject I may state, that notwithstanding the brilliant exploits of our fleets and armies, I yet entertain the opinion, that it would have been possible to have effected everything that British and continental interests required in a manner that would have been reconcileable with such a mode of proceeding towards France as would have avoided the excitement of so bitter a feeling towards us in that country, the consequence of which has been, the unproductive expenditure of a vast amount of capital in making preparations for war, and the generation of a feeling in the French mind which, I fear, will for some time prevent the re-establishment of those friendly relations between France and this country, which I sincerely wish to be permanent, and which, I believe, to be one of the most essential foundations for the permanent peace and tranquillity of Europe. But into these considerations I will not enter; because I wish mainly to urge the constitutional ground upon which my motion is founded. Confining myself to that ground, and maintaining silence upon all others, I dare say I shall be met by the taunt, that I have brought forward no scheme of comprehensive policy of my own. I shall be told that this is a decisive motion—that I might possibly have concealed my opinions when I was discussing the sugar duties, but that when I invited the House to concur in a motion of this kind, I ought to be prepared with some declaration of public opinion upon all questions of public interest and national importance. To that

I answer—Where is the man that has more explicitly declared than I have, his opinions upon all the great constitutional questions that have of late years been raised—upon the ballot—upon the extension of the suffrage—upon the shortening the duration of Parliaments? Have I ever withheld my opinions upon any one of those great questions. The hon. Member for Finsbury says to me, “Make a bidding against the Government. Outbid the Government! Propose something further than the Government, and then you shall have the support of Gentlemen of extreme opinions like myself.” I shall do no such thing. I make no bidding for popular applause. I maintain my opinions upon the great constitutional questions to which I have referred, and I shall not, for the purpose of filching some support from the Government on the present occasion, indicate opinions at variance with those which, in the course of discussions upon those individual questions, I have constantly expressed. Did I not, when a question like the present was last under the consideration of the House, did I not, upon the vote of confidence last year, fully and explicitly state my views with respect to all the ordinary subjects of legislation? Have I not, when any question has been brought forward, whether church reform, church rates, or any other question of important public interest, invariably expressed my opinions in plain and explicit terms? What is the public question of ordinary legislation in respect to which any rational doubt can be entertained as to my views? I certainly draw a distinction between financial questions, and ordinary matters of policy. I stated the other night—I stated explicitly, that I would not express any opinion upon the financial condition of the country; and I repeat now—giving you the full advantage of that expression of my opinion—that if I were called to power to-morrow, I would claim the right (for it was in that sense I used the expression) deliberately to review the financial position of the country, and that I would not be forced into any precipitate measures for the purpose of extricating the Exchequer from its present difficulty. These are the grounds upon which I submit, with confidence, my resolution to the House of Commons. I never have been a flatterer of the House of Commons. I never have encouraged the House of Commons in

any attempt to carry measures which I thought would have the effect of unduly increasing its own privileges and power, at the expense of the prerogative of the Crown. The very last occasion on which I gave a vote, was in support of her Majesty’s Government, in their attempt to resist a motion, which, in their opinion, would have the effect of unduly encroaching upon the prerogative of the Crown. I did what I could to support the Crown’s prerogative; but my example was not followed by many Members of her Majesty’s Government. I did what I could to resist the attempt of the House of Commons to interfere with the undoubted prerogative of the Crown. That attempt, Sir, was defeated by your single vote. You were the single obstacle to a motion, which, in your opinion, would amount to an interference with the prerogative of the Crown. You, Sir, though the organ of the House of Commons, had the manliness, which I expected from the consistency of your conduct; yes, Sir, you had the manliness to interpose your single but exalted and effectual authority against a measure, which you deemed injurious to the principles of the constitution. I expected that vote, and I expected the declaration of principle upon which it was given. But when I saw how great had been the risk, I could not but feel confirmed in my opinion, that the prerogative of the Crown was not safely protected by a Government, which, even with the aid that I, assisted by my friends, could lend them, could command only an equality of votes upon a question of so much importance, and were obliged to call upon the Speaker to save them from the disgrace of defeat, upon a matter in which the prerogative of the Crown was directly concerned. But, although I have resisted, and always will resist, any unconstitutional attempt on the part of the House of Commons, to trench upon the prerogative of the Crown, I have yet endeavoured to maintain in the House of Commons, every just principle to which it could lay a claim. I supported the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) last year in defence of the privileges of the House of Commons. I might, upon that occasion, have been seduced by the temptation of party advantage, to take a different course. As it was, I had to encounter the pain of differing from, perhaps, a majority of my friends. But I thought that vital interests—that important powers

were at stake, and I was determined that I would not, to conciliate the favour and affection of my own esteemed friends, put to hazard the legitimate privileges of the House of Commons, and subject the House of Commons to the control of a court of law. I know that it is imprudent and unwise to advert to these things. I know that it would be more politic on my part to conceal these differences with my friends. But I will be guilty of no such concealment. I differed from them and voted against them, from a sincere belief, that it was absolutely necessary for the vindication of the privileges of the House of Commons, nay, that it was essential to our existence as a legislative body, that we should have the power of free publication. Why should I shrink from a reference to the opinions I then expressed, and the vote I then gave? Is it not rather a subject of pride with me that I can be permitted to take my own independent view as to the vital privileges of the House of Commons, and yet that due justice shall be done to my motives, and that I shall again be able to rally around me in the bond of common connection and common esteem, those Friends from whom I happen upon this particular question to differ. Acting in conformity with these views, which teach me to resist the encroachment of the House upon the prerogative of the Crown, and yet to maintain for the House itself its legitimate influence in the State, I think I may fairly conclude that the House of Commons has a right to expect that the Minister of the Crown, who is alike the proper guardian of the royal prerogative and of Parliamentary privilege, should possess its confidence. This present House of Commons has been constituted and moulded upon the views of the noble Lord the Member for Stroud (Lord J. Russell). The noble Lord was the author of the bill by which this House of Commons was constituted. It was the noble Lord who thought it expedient to abolish the system of nomination boroughs. It was the noble Lord who thought it expedient to introduce more of popular spirit into the constitution of this House—to make it correspond more with the progress of popular intelligence, and with the advance of knowledge. To achieve this the noble Lord thought that we ought to make the House more an image of the public opinion—an assembly more sympathizing with the people—more

originating from the people—more expressive of the public view. This House of Commons, thus constituted according to the views of the noble Lord—this House of Commons had the advantage (if it could be so considered) of being elected under the noble Lord's auspices; and whatever benefit there may be from having had its election at the time when her gracious Majesty came to the throne of these kingdoms, that benefit also the noble Lord was possessed of. Yet this House of Commons so constituted, so elected under the auspices of the noble Lord—this House of Commons it is that has given, as I think, sufficient indications that it withholds its confidence from the Government of which the noble Lord is a conspicuous member.—I trust I have executed this duty in conformity with the spirit in which I intended to execute it—with none of that asperity of party which I may sometimes be betrayed into when rising at the end of a debate to speak under the excitement and agitation which naturally belong to that period of our deliberations. It has not been my intention to treat with disrespect those who hold the executive offices of Government, but it has been my intention to say to the Government, it is your duty to the House of Commons—if it has those additional claims upon public confidence which you ascribe to it—if it embodies more of the public spirit—if it reflects more accurately the image of the public mind than those which have preceded it—it is your duty, your peculiar duty, not to deprive it of any of the legitimate influences which it possessed under other circumstances, and which you were the first to recognise, and to wish to extend.—Of this I am convinced, that if the House of Commons so constituted had ratified your decrees—had acted in conformity with your suggestions, you would have been the first to acknowledge its opinions with respect; and let me tell you that when the House of Commons takes a different course, it is your bounden duty not to reject its decisions with scorn, because they are unfavourable to your views, and hostile to your continuance in power.

Lord *Worsley* trusted that the House—considering the position in which he stood, having so lately felt it his duty to oppose the Government—would indulge him whilst he made a few observations in reference to the speech just delivered by the right hon.

Baronet. Before he did so, he certainly must tender to the right hon. Baronet his acknowledgments for the temperate manner in which he had laid the subject before the House, and for the example of calmness and moderation which he had so judiciously set—an example which he hoped the House would appreciate and follow. The right hon. Baronet seemed to found his motion upon two principal points; first, upon the constitutional point, and secondly upon various reasons upon which he assumed an absence of confidence in the Ministry. If he were not mistaken, many of the points upon which the right hon. Baronet now rested his motion of want of confidence in the Government, were under discussion as far back as 1839. That remark at least was true as regarded the Jamaica Bill and the Appropriation clause. He apprehended that what took place in 1839 could not be made the ground of such a motion as that now brought forward by the right hon. Baronet, seeing that since that time the House of Commons had carried a vote of confidence in favour of the present Ministry. Nothing, therefore, that preceded that vote, could be made a ground upon which to found a motion like that now under the consideration of the House. Another point upon which the right hon. Baronet seemed mainly to rely, was the financial embarrassment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the right hon. Baronet complained that the Government had improperly given way to a pressure from without, when there was a general application throughout the country for the reduction of the large charges upon postage. Since that time, also, the House of Commons had agreed to a vote of confidence in the Ministry, and, if his memory did not fail him, it was remarkable that more than one hundred of the Members who usually voted with the right hon. Baronet had supported the Government proposition for the reduction of postage. Considering the position in which he was placed, he hoped he might be allowed to state the reasons which induced him not to agree in the motion of the right hon. Baronet. The House was aware that he had almost always, except upon a very recent occasion, supported the policy of the present Government. He believed that policy in general to have been correct and just, and he was, therefore, satisfied that a vote of want of confidence was uncalled for and undeserved. For, in his opinion, it would be most unwise in the House of Commons to express

a want of confidence, or to pass resolutions deprecatory of the conduct of Government founded upon one single isolated point of its policy: a motion of want of confidence ought to be founded, not upon a particular act, but upon the general policy of a Government. If he wanted an authority in support of the proposition, he would refer to the recorded opinion of the right hon. Baronet himself, for he found that when the noble Lord, the present Secretary of State for the Colonies, moved, in 1835, that no settlement of the Irish Church question could be satisfactory which did not involve the principle of the Appropriation clause, the right hon. Baronet used these words:—

"It would be difficult to conceive the existence of any Government, however perfect in its general policy, which should not make some errors, or adopt some individual course of policy which the House of Commons could not justify or approve of, if appealed to for its opinion; and then this evil would result to the country from our coming to a vote of partial approbation or condemnation, that we should leave the public in utter doubt and ignorance whether the House of Commons approved or not of the general conduct and policy of the Government."

He quite agreed in those sentiments. He did not wish the House or the country to be left in any doubt as to his opinion of the general policy of the Government. He regretted most deeply the course they had lately taken. He thought, that the hon. Gentlemen opposite would remember, that it was only the other evening that he stated, that although it was painful to him to separate himself from the Government—although he felt that his voting against them might probably transfer the power of Government to those who sat opposite, yet that upon the question of the Corn-laws he felt that he had only one course to pursue, and that whenever that question was brought forward, he should be compelled to repeat the vote which he had reluctantly, but conscientiously, given against them upon the sugar-duties. But then he could not but ask himself this question—whether, because he differed from the Government upon these isolated points of policy, he should, therefore, abandon all those principles upon which he conscientiously agreed with them? He conceived that he should be abandoning those principles if he voted in favour of the proposition now submitted to the House by the right hon. Baronet. He begged to ask also, how it could be expected that he should withdraw

his confidence from the present Government if he were not prepared to place confidence in any other? He would ask the hon. Gentlemen opposite what inducement there was to him, as the representative of an agricultural county, to support the right hon. Baronet? The right hon. Baronet had told the House that he was opposed to a fixed duty upon foreign corn, and that he was favourable to a sliding scale. But what security was there, that the right hon. Baronet would not himself propose a sliding scale, that would be as obnoxious to the agricultural interests as the fixed duty suggested by the present Ministry? He thought, that the agricultural interests, who were now so much alarmed at the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would have good ground for a continuance of their alarm if they did not know what the right hon. Baronet was prepared to propose. The right hon. Baronet ought to let the agricultural interests know what extent of protection he intended to afford, in case of an alteration of the sliding scale. The public, as yet, were wholly uninformed upon that point. He thought, too, that persons connected with agriculture might reasonably entertain great doubt upon the subject, if the report which had reached him were true, namely, that there were two Conservatives now started at Manchester, one of whom had held a situation of confidence under the Administration of the right hon. Baronet, Sir George Murray, and who now sought the suffrages of the electors of Manchester upon the assurance that he was favourable to a low fixed duty upon corn. As he had already stated, he approved of the general policy of the Government. They had seen the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, introduce measures for the purpose of carrying out the Reform Bill, for extending the education of the people, and they had seen all those measures opposed by the right hon. Baronet opposite. When he considered, that he himself had taken a strong part in support of the measures proposed by Government, he asked the House how it was possible for him to transfer his confidence to any Government that was likely to be formed? He had presented lately no less than 130 petitions, all of which, with the exception of eight or nine, prayed that there might be no alteration in the Corn-laws. The petitioners stated, that they had heard with great alarm, and some stated with indignation, the proposals which had been intro-

duced by Government. And it might be supposed by Gentlemen opposite, that it was, therefore, his duty to aid in throwing the present Government out of office. He did not, however, think that he was called on to do so, for he felt certain that when the question of the Corn-laws was brought forward, they would be able to throw out the Government plan, and he would assist in throwing it out. His opinion was, that the Government were entitled to consider that they possessed the confidence of the House in their general policy. If they were so entitled, how, he would ask, were they doing anything unconstitutional in retaining office. The right hon. Baronet opposite had alluded to several administrations that had resigned when they thought that they did not possess the confidence of the House, and among the rest to his own resignation in 1835. The right hon. Baronet had been beaten on the election of the Speaker by ten, and on the address by seven. The right hon. Baronet had been beaten four times on Irish Church questions. He begged to call to the recollection of the right hon. Baronet, that he said on that occasion, not on the ground of consistency, but because he thought the Tithe question could not be postponed,

"There may be points on which the House of Commons may come to a different conclusion from that of the Government; it may do so on an abstract question, and that a question of great importance, but still such as to admit of postponement; and there may be cases where it would be possible for a Government, even in opposition to the House of Commons, to conduct the administration of public affairs; but you cannot leave the Tithe question in its present state."

On such grounds, then, he did not think that he could be accused of acting an inconsistent part. Although he had opposed Government the other day in one branch of their policy, yet having ever since he sat in that House approved of their general policy, he did not consider that he was acting inconsistently in refusing to withdraw his confidence in the Government, even although he could not give his consent to all the measures which they had brought forward. Some hon. Members seemed to think, that as the proposals of Government in regard to the Corn-laws had caused a great degree of irritation among the farmers, it was his duty as one of their representatives to vote for the motion of the right hon. Baronet opposite. It is possible, that during the

present irritation the farmers might wish him to give such a vote, but he thought, that when they came to consider the question in their calmer moments, that they would be of a different opinion—more especially when they recollected that the motion, if successful, might take the administration of affairs out of the hands of the Government, which had always attempted to carry out the principles of reform, and place it in the hands of those who had on all occasions endeavoured to prevent the freedom of election, and who had refused to increase the franchise in Ireland, although it was well known that the franchise was gradually diminishing. When the farmers considered these things—when they saw that the transferring of power to the Gentlemen opposite would have the effect of preventing all measures of reform from being carried out, he did not think that they would consider their representatives justified in opposing the general policy of Government for the purpose of showing their spite and their pique against it.

Mr. Christopher was induced to rise in consequence of the observations made by the noble Lord who had just sat down. He confessed himself surprised at the speech which the noble Lord had ventured to address to the House, considering, that it was only on Friday last, that the noble Lord, in conjunction with himself, had attended a large, influential, and unanimous meeting of their constituents, convened by the high sheriff of the county, and held in the castle-yard of Lincoln. He ventured to tell the noble Lord, that not a person attended on that occasion who did not depart from the meeting under the conviction, that the noble Lord had withdrawn his confidence from the Government. What species of delusion had come over the senses of his noble Friend since he left the county of Lincoln he was unable to explain, nor could he understand how the air of the City of London could be more favourable to the doctrines of free trade and confidence in Ministers than the air of the county of Lincoln. He would take the liberty of reminding the noble Lord of an expression he made use of at that meeting in a most emphatic manner, and which was loudly cheered. The noble Lord stated, "That as Government were prepared to overthrow the agricultural interest, he was prepared to overthrow the Government." That there might be no

misunderstanding on this point, he took the liberty of addressing his constituents after the noble Lord, and in the course of his address he gave the noble Lord credit for having deserted a party with whom he had been so long accustomed to act. The noble Lord did not contradict the declaration which he (Mr. Christopher) then made, although it was true, that he had so far qualified his statement in regard to the certain measures supported by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, who he considered as about to take office, and in whom he declared he could not by any possibility place his confidence. Notwithstanding this, he ventured to say, that no person who attended that meeting—and he had afterwards conversed with several of the noble Lord's supporters—who did not go away in the firm and solid conviction, that if any motion of want of confidence was made in that House, the noble Lord would be among those who supported it. He had no intention of entering into the discussion of the evening, but he had no hesitation in saying, that he thought the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth was fully justified, on constitutional grounds, in making the motion which he had brought forward. What had been the conduct of Government? They had introduced measures which they were unable to carry—they had been completely foiled in some of those measures—some of them, such as the Poor-law Bill, they had withdrawn in anticipation of a dissolution, well knowing the unfavourable effect which the passing of that measure might have on the constituency at large. It would be an insult on the understanding of the agricultural constituency to suppose, that they would attach any weight to the arguments of the noble Lord, that he would support the Government because of their general policy, but that he would not support them on the question of the Corn-laws. That he would vote against them on that particular question, but that he would support them on every other. Was not that giving his confidence to Government? Was not that a sort of passive confidence, which would enable them to come forward at some future period with greater strength in support of a measure, by means of which they were creating an agitation throughout the country, particularly among the large masses of the manufacturing population, with a view not only to obtain a majority in that House, but

also with the intention of carrying into effect that very measure in which the noble Lord declared he could not support the Government. No agricultural constituency would ever acquiesce in such an argument. They maintained, that to give a vote of confidence in favour of Government would have the ultimate effect of enabling them to carry the very question which their representatives deprecated, and which would subvert the whole interests of the country, whether dependent on agriculture, manufactures, or commerce.

Lord Worsley, though somewhat irregular, begged the indulgence of the House, while he explained what he had stated at the meeting alluded to by the hon. Member who had just sat down. On that occasion one of his constituents asked him the question whether he was willing to originate a motion himself, or would support one made by any other Member for a vote of want of confidence in Ministers? He would read the answer which he gave to that question. He said:—

“Although the meeting is called solely with regard to the Ministerial proposal for a fixed duty on foreign corn, and I might say that it would be out of the regular course of proceeding, to go into a question of politics, yet as I have always, since I have been your representative, acted towards you fairly and openly, and independently, so on the present occasion, I will do, and I can have no objection to answer the question of Mr. Brailsford. There must be many questions on which I think in the same manner as the present Government; it was difficult for me to withdraw my confidence from a Government which I had supported for ten years; but when I found them acting wrongly on the question of the Corn-laws, I was compelled to withdraw my support, because I thought there was no necessity whatever for the measure to be brought forward. I did not class together all the three subjects proposed; I opposed them on the sugar duties, because I found it stated, that a greater quantity of sugar was likely to be brought in next year, the production of our own colonies, by 60,000 tons, than our consumption; but it was on making the Corn-laws a question of taxation for the Budget that I withdrew my support. But having done so, in what Government am I to place reliance? The effect of our votes has been to create the probability of a transfer of power from those with whom we have usually acted. But do not let me from that circumstance mislead you into the belief, that I could place unlimited confidence in Sir Robert Peel. This would be acting a most inconsistent part. I have been opposed to very much of his policy; and if I were to turn round and join him, they

might justly say, that I had lost my temper, and was opposing those with whom I had acted for ten years politically, because I was piqued about their proposing an alteration of the Corn-law. I cannot, therefore, do that which would amount to such a declaration. There are other points also in which I disagree from him. I cannot go to alter that system of policy towards Ireland which I have so strenuously supported. I have always acted independent of party as your representative, and I have voted for such measures as I considered were best for the country. I believe, that on no one division of any importance have I been absent, because I have always thought it more manly to take a decided part, rather than keep away, as if I could not make up my mind how to vote. In withdrawing my support from the present Government, I am not pledged to any other; I have acted the part which I considered to be most consistent in my support of the Corn-laws, and I shall continue to follow the same line of conduct and general policy which I have done, since you sent me to the House of Commons, and which, I believe, has met with your approval.”

Sir John Hobhouse: Mr. Speaker, I am happy that I gave way to the noble Lord (Lord Worsley) who has just sat down, as it has enabled him to give a most satisfactory explanation of the vote which he is about to give. Nothing can be more just—nothing more consistent than the course which the noble Lord is about to pursue: indeed, the contrary course would have been most unwise and unreasonable. The noble Lord differs from the Government on one point, it is true, and that point a very important one; but on account of that single difference, would it not be the height of imprudence to vote against the general character of that Government, to which, for so many years he has given his able and manly support? It would—and I trust the example of the noble Lord will be followed by others similarly circumstanced. At all events, the high character, the well-known long-tried patriotism, the station of that noble Lord, are such as to place his motives far, far above suspicion. I say this, because, when he was making his explanation, he was interrupted by ironical cheers from some of those charitable Gentlemen opposite, of the agricultural interest, who are in the habit of acting and talking as if they monopolised all the virtue as well as all the talents of the country. It is quite true, as the noble Lord has before remarked, that in opening this discussion



the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) has not passed the bounds of temper and moderation ; nor, in arraiguing the conduct of the Government, has made use of any bitterness of language, nor indulged in any strain of condemnation of which we have a right to complain, or which his peculiar position, and the cause which he advocates, do not seem to require. But, in granting to him this merit, I must take the liberty of entirely dissenting from the main statement which he has endeavoured to make good by a reference to facts. I altogether and entirely dissent from the assertion that the Government has, on the whole, from the first moment of its existence to the present day, been unable to carry into effect the measures which they considered essential to the interests and well-being of the country. [*A Laugh.*] I hear a laugh from the same back bench opposite, from which proceeded the same mark of attention to my noble Friend, and am happy to perceive that the Member does me at least the honour of listening to me. I have the honour of some acquaintance with him (Lord Darlington), and flatter myself that he will agree with me when I say, that if in the contradiction which I have just given to the right hon. Baronet's assertion, there be anything which the good sense, the good feeling, the knowledge of facts possessed by the impartial part of the community, repudiates and denies, I shall be content, and ought to put up, with the laughter of that noble Member and all his friends ; but, if the contrary be the case, and the general conviction of the nation be in unison with mine, then the ridicule, if any there be, must attach to those who have favoured me with this interruption. Sir, I repeat, the Government has not been, nor is, in the condition described by the right hon. Baronet. We have had to contend with many difficulties—more difficulties than ever beset a Government. When first formed in April, 1835, the right hon. Baronet took care to lend us his helping hand at the very outset of our career. He told the House and the country what was true enough, that we did not possess the confidence of the Crown ; for, he said, that in resigning office, he and his Colleagues were honoured with the entire confidence of the Sovereign. The assertion of that fact, which now belongs to history, and which no delicacy renders it now inexpedient to deny, did,

as it was meant to do, add to the difficulties of our position at the commencement of our career. Every one must admit, that the cordial sympathy and support of the Sovereign is a great and essential element of strength to any administration. It is one of the first requisites of power ; and this truth is felt, more perhaps by those who have it not, than by those who have it. [Sir James Graham appeared to dissent.] Of course I mean not to say that it is the only requisite ; far from it. I have as much respect for Parliament as the right hon. Baronet. I look for its support with the same anxiety, and abide by its decision with the same respect, and acknowledge all its high privileges and powers with the same deference and submission as that right hon. Gentleman or any other Member ; but, I again assert, that the cordial confidence and support of the Crown must be a source of strength and weight to any Ministers. That source of strength we had not when we first took office in 1835, nor did we enjoy it in the first years of our administration. Again, from the first moment down to this time, we have had to contend with a hostile House of Lords, a great and most powerful body, individually and collectively—not so much a concurrent as a rival branch of the Legislature, in so far as regarded us,—crushing and mutilating, or thwarting and delaying all our principal measures ; scarcely enduring the common course of legislation, if proceeding from a House of Commons influenced by us. Yet with the Crown thus unfriendly in the first instance, and a House of Lords almost uniformly inimical, we have, I contend, been able to carry great measures, to work out our own policy, and to effect those reforms which we thought beneficial to the State. We came into office on the 17th of April, 1835, but did not begin the transactions of public business until June. Parliament closed in September, and in the interval we had passed the great measure of municipal reform for England and Wales. This was our first exploit—the first fruit of this barren, unproductive administration. In the Session of 1836, we passed the English Tithe Commutation Bill—a work often contemplated, sometimes attempted in vain—a work, which I recollect hearing described by one of the leading Members opposite, as of itself quite sufficient for the labour of a Session. But, besides

this important measure, we also passed, in 1836, the Births, and Deaths, and the Marriage Registration Bills—enactments of no small consequence, and which were regarded then, as they are now, as a great boon to the dissenting part of the community. In 1837, the demise of the Crown put a stop to active legislation in regard to our proposed reforms; but, in 1838, we settled the Irish Tithe Question. It is true, that settlement contained no affirmation of the abstract principle of appropriation. I dare say we shall be taunted for having given way on that point, and yet how often were we told by Gentlemen opposite, how often by the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire (Lord Stanley), that we ought not to be prevented by false pride, or false shame, from abandoning that bone of contention, in order to secure the substantial benefit of putting the question to rest. In fact, by consent of friends, with acquiescence, at the time, of opponents, though at the risk of future misrepresentation, we resolved to take this step towards giving content to Ireland; and we carried the Irish Tithe Bill through both Houses of Parliament. In the next Session, that of 1839, our opponents were more upon the alert, and thought the victory their own; but, in spite of the occurrences of May, in that year, we passed measures, which in other times would have been esteemed of much magnitude. Take one for example, the County Constabulary Bill. (*a Laugh*) Gentlemen smile—was that nothing? Was that a trifling change; I am sorry to say, that it was not passed without great difficulty, and that the opposition to the rural police is alive and active to this day. In this Session, also, we passed the Reduction of Postage Bill, a measure of the greatest consequence; and, whether for good or for evil, involving important changes affecting the highest interests of society. I know the right hon. Baronet puts this measure down to the demerit side of our account; but let me remind him, that if we were wrong in this act, the mischief cannot be laid altogether to our door. Who contended strongly for it in the House of Lords? No less a man than Lord Ashburton, one of the right hon. Gentleman's own Cabinet. Who urged it in this House? Lord Lothian, also a Member of the same Administration? Who besides? No other than the noble Member for Liverpool (Lord Sandon), the

very mover of the recent famous resolution, the prime author of our boasted defeat. No less than twenty-nine of the usual supporters of the right hon. Baronet voted for the Postage Bill; and with them we must share the praise or share the blame. In the Session of 1840, we passed three most important bills. The long-contested Irish Municipal Bill, the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenues Bill, and the Canada Union Bill. I perceive that Gentlemen opposite wish to take some credit to themselves for one or more of these measures. Sir, I do not deny that we had their partial assistance on these occasions. Certainly, and in the present state of parties, and in the present constitution of the House of Commons, no Government can carry anything without some acquiescence on the part of its opponents. Add to which, that the House of Lords can at any time obstruct any Administration, having much more power than we possess in this House. I have thus enumerated the principal measures which we have carried through Parliament since we have administered the affairs of the country, measures affecting the most important political reforms, and bearing upon the dearest interests of the empire. I say nothing of the ordinary business of Parliament, nor of the way in which the various departments of the State have been conducted. I say nothing of the great and complicated affairs which have been entrusted to the management of my noble Friend, the Foreign Secretary, and which have been so managed as to win for him the admiration of all Europe, and the reluctant approval even of the hon. Gentlemen opposite. Suffice it to say, that he has upheld the honour and the interests of the nation in every quarter of the globe. Such, Sir, has been the character and conduct of this Administration, and such, I will venture to say, was the impression as to this Administration at the beginning of this Session, both as respects domestic and foreign policy, that no one, no, not the right hon. Baronet himself, contemplated any such attack as has been now made upon it. The desire to injure and obstruct the Government was, of course, as lively as ever—the determination to upset it, if possible, as fixed as ever; but the common remark was, “Here is a great party resolved to turn out a Ministry against whose measures, either in mass or in detail, they cannot allege

one reasonable complaint." I repeat, no one would have dreamt of making such a motion as this at the beginning of the Session; and if, either by what we have done or by what we have not done, we deserve the condemnation which the right hon. Baronet wishes now to pass upon us, our sins and our incapacity must date only from that period. The right hon. Baronet chose to take a different view, and to attach to our whole career a character of incompetency. I have endeavoured to show, and I trust with success, that up to a very recent date we have been possessed of sufficient power to carry out our own policy, and that the charge made against us by the right hon. Baronet is unfounded and unjust. What, then, is the pretext for the assertion of the resolution, that we are not in possession of the confidence of this House sufficiently to enable us to carry measures which we consider of benefit to the public? The proceedings on the Irish Registration Bill were touched upon, but very slightly, by the right hon. Baronet—true, we were unable to carry that bill; but let me remind him, that we affirmed the principle of that bill by a small majority—small I admit, but still decisive, at least of one point, that the counter-bill of the noble Member for North Lancashire could not pass. If, then, we are to be condemned as powerless, because we cannot pass our Irish Registration Bill, what, let me ask, will be the sentence passed on the Gentlemen opposite, should they become Ministers, and attempt to pass their Irish Registration Bill? Why, if Parliament retains its expressed opinion, those Gentlemen, the new Ministry that is to be, will be, or ought to be, declared unworthy of confidence, and their continuance in office will be pronounced, "under such circumstances" unconstitutional. I fully admit all the grave and inevitable consequences of the adverse vote, recently agreed to in favour of the resolution of the noble Member for Liverpool. I was not the least surprised at that vote. The motion was concocted, and the mode of bringing it forward contrived with admirable ingenuity and skill. There was the West-India body to begin—the East India to second the attack—the heavy armed columns of the landed proprietors to bring up the rear and decide the conflict. The pretext was humanity—the motive self-interest—and the glorious end and aim

were the destruction of one Ministry and the restitution of another on its remains. And here I must be allowed to congratulate the House and the country, that the basis of the fabric from which we were assailed gave way almost at once—the wretched humanity pretext crumbled to pieces, and fell to the ground at the first shock of its own attack. This anti-slavery cry, originating with exactly the same parties as had raised the anti-opium cry of last year, met with the same but a more speedy fate. The anti-opium cry maintained a feeble life in this House, but was stifled in the House of Lords by one or two sensible remarks made by the Duke of Wellington and Lord Ellenborough. But it is now almost forgotten, and gone with this other short-lived offspring of mock humanity to the "tomb of all the Capulets." Yet so it is, that the main excuse, I might say the only excuse, for bringing forward this resolution of a want of confidence in Ministers, is the fact, that they were beaten the other day on the amendment against going into a Committee of Ways and Means, moved by the noble Member for Liverpool. I do not mean to deny the importance of that defeat, but I do mean to deny what the right hon. Baronet has just asserted so roundly, that previous administrations have uniformly thought it their duty to give way and resign, when defeated on similar occasions. The right hon. Baronet has alluded to the case of Sir Robert Walpole, but it seems to me, that if the example of that great statesman is to be cited at all, it tells more against than for the argument of the right hon. Baronet. Sir Robert Walpole resigned, after a series of defeats, upon a matter comparatively insignificant, and yielded to the coalesced operations, headed by the accomplished Pulteney, the Peel, if I may say so, of that day. The strange combination of parties, by which he was forced from office, scarcely survived the victory, having no fixed principles, and no common tie, except hatred of the ministry. The persons comprising the coalition soon differed amongst themselves, and when a new Government was formed, the nation found, to its cost, that it had gained nothing by the change. But had Walpole never brought forward a great financial measure, which he had been unable to carry? and did he resign upon any such failure? Gentlemen know that his Excise

Scheme was his favourite project, that he attached the greatest importance to it, that he declared it indispensable for meeting the exigencies of the times. But he could not carry it. [Sir Robert Peel: He carried it in the Commons.] I know he carried it in the Commons, but the opposition to it in the Lords, and the clamour raised against it in the nation were so great, as to force him to abandon the measure. Did he resign? No such thing; nor is it known that any one thought he ought to resign on that occasion. Take more recent instances. I rather think the right hon. Baronet was a member of Lord Liverpool's Government: that Government, on the question of continuing the Property Tax, was beaten by a majority, I believe, of thirty-seven—a number which it seems ought to be fatal. Did Lord Liverpool's Government resign in consequence of that defeat? a defeat on a proposal to supply about twelve millions of revenue? There was no resignation, nor an attempt to force a resignation. Again, the same Government sustained a signal discomfiture in regard to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. It is true the proposal was not made by themselves, but it was opposed by them as a Cabinet, the whole force of the Government was brought to bear against it in this House. The question was one of state policy, which had been agitated by some of the greatest men of former times—Mr. Fox had failed to carry the measure: it was a great reform. My noble Friend again proposed the repeal of these obnoxious statutes: the Government opposed him with its whole force; the result is known; it was the first of the many triumphs of my noble Friend in the cause of civil and religious liberty. Well, did the Government resign? Not at all, nor did any one ask them to resign on that account; and here I may be permitted to allude to that of which the right hon. Baronet has reminded the House, I mean the question which I put to him in 1830, when, after his defeat on the Civil List, I asked him if he intended to resign. Sir, that question was an indiscretion on my part, I confessed it to be so in my place in Parliament; and having made that apology for it, I should have thought that the right hon. Baronet might have had the generosity not to taunt me with it.—This brings me down to that part of the right hon. Baronet's own conduct, to

which, I must confess, it requires no little courage for him to allude on this occasion—I mean his short administration of 1834 and 1835. He takes credit to himself for having yielded to the opinion of the House of Commons, and resigned his office in deference to that opinion. True—he did resign; but did he resign so soon as he ought to have done? did he yield in time? did he yield at that time when, according to his own principle, as expounded by him to night, he ought to have yielded? Let us recall the facts. When the new Parliament, the right hon. Baronet's own Parliament, met in February, 1835, he proposed for Speaker the gentleman who had so long and so ably filled that office a favourite of the House; but he was opposed and beaten by a majority of ten. A more decisive sign of the feelings of the House towards him could scarcely be given, and he well knows that, in previous times of our parliamentary history, the struggle for the speaker's chair has often been a party struggle, the result of which has decided the character, and manifested the inclinations of the House. Did he resign? No.—What happened next? The right hon. Baronet, by mouth of a Friend, moved an address in answer to his Majesty's speech from the throne—An amendment was moved on that address—not a mere formal amendment—not an omission or insertion of unimportant words; but a substantive amendment, directly and expressly condemning the advice which the right hon. Baronet had given to the Crown, on that most important of all matters, the dissolution of the Parliament. Remember also that the Parliament of 1834 had been dissolved under peculiar circumstances. It had given to the Ministers just dismissed a majority of two hundred and forty or more. Indeed, the Duke of Wellington, speaking in July 1834, said, "the Ministerial majority is as strong as ever;" but Parliament was not sitting, and had pronounced no opinion on the new Government. The right hon. Baronet would not meet that Parliament. He advised the king to dissolve it, and it was dissolved. I do not deny his right to give this advice, any more than the right of the next Parliament to give an opinion on that advice. We know what that opinion was—it condemned the advice given by the right hon. Baronet in this most essential particular; and the House of Commons, by a majority

of seven, pronounced a verdict against the right hon. Gentleman—a verdict which amounted to a vote of no confidence as much as any vote could do; for even the most influential of the Gentlemen who voted with him declared, at the time, that in giving that vote, they did not mean to signify that he had their confidence. I allude to a declaration made at the time by the right hon. Member for Pembroke, or the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire. But, how did the right hon. Baronet act? Did he resign? Oh no—far from it: he said he should “*persevere to the last*.” What occurred next? I shall not enlarge upon the appointment of Lord Londonderry to the embassy to St. Petersburg, and to the cancelling of that appointment in consequence of the strong feeling manifested in this House. The right hon. Baronet now tells us, that had the House come to an adverse vote on that appointment he would have resigned; but he did not say this at the time, and after his patience in the choice of a Speaker, and on the address, it was not likely that we should guess that such was his determination. Indeed, we had no helps to come at that conclusion, for the right hon. Gentleman was again and again defeated, but still remained in office. He did get one majority on the question of the Repeal of the Malt Tax, but that was when he was rescued from the assaults of the agriculturists by us—by the opposition. He was defeated on the Chatham Election petition by a majority of thirty-one, upon the Leicester Election Petition by a majority of sixteen, and on the address to the Crown for a charter for the London University by a majority of 110. Then followed the memorable discussions in regard to the Church of Ireland, when, after three signal defeats, the right hon. Baronet did, indeed, at last, resign. I think he would have done far better to have resigned after his defeat on the question of Speaker. (*Cheers*.) I understand those cheers, and I repeat, that he would, in my opinion, have done far better to have resigned at once. I told him so at the time. He had not the confidence, nor could command a majority of the House on any occasion. A Minister, under such circumstances, must do one of two things: he must either resign, or he must follow the example of Mr. Pitt in 1784, he must advise a dissolution of Parliament. Con-

vince me that such is our position, and I shall pronounce the same opinion in regard to ourselves as I did in regard to the right hon. Gentleman. I repeat, that Gentleman never had the confidence of the constituent body, or of the House, from the day we left office in November, 1834, to the day when he quitted office, the 8th of April, 1835. The Parliament which was in existence, though not in Session, when the Duke of Wellington was holding all the seals of office before the right hon. Gentleman's arrival from Rome, was so hostile to him that he dared not meet it. What the constituent body was may be known by the elections to the Parliament of 1835:—what that Parliament was I have already shown. May I not, therefore, safely say, that, during the whole of this short Administration, the right hon. Baronet held office without the confidence of this House, and in direct defiance of that which his resolution of this day declares to be the principles of the Constitution. I reminded him of this at the time. To govern under such circumstances is unconstitutional. Mr. Fox said truly, “to govern against the wishes of this House is no government at all.” [*Cheers*.] Gentlemen opposite cheer loudly at this as if we denied the truth of it, or acted, or meant to act, against it. I will say for myself, that nothing should induce me to hold office five minutes on such terms. I think it wrong: I think it defenceless. The right hon. Baronet did so, and I say he acted unconstitutionally. He actually did what he charges us with an intention to do. He maintained himself in office long after he must have known that he could not carry the measures which he considered essential for the service and welfare of the country. My noble Friend (Lord John Russell) in 1835 said, the right hon. Baronet had taken a constitutional course. The right hon. Baronet caught at the encomium, as if applying to his whole course of proceeding; but my noble Friend must have confined the praise to his resignation, which I again affirm was too long, far too long delayed; which indeed, I repeat, ought to have taken place the day after Mr. Abercromby was placed in the chair of this House. The right hon. Baronet has alluded a good deal to the Parliamentary struggle of 1784. The history of that struggle, and the inferences to be drawn from it, seem to me directly opposed to the view now

taken by him. What then occurred? Mr. Pitt took office in 1783 (December), and from that time, so long as the Parliament lasted, that is until March, he was in repeated minorities, so many as thirteen or fourteen,\* and these on questions of the utmost importance—votes of no confidence, of addresses to the Crown against him, of addresses against dissolution, of rejection of his great measure the India Bill. Did he resign? He did not. Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke attacked his conduct as unconstitutional. The right hon. Baronet has quoted their sentiments as if he disapproved of the conduct of Mr. Pitt—whereas, it turns out he thinks Mr. Pitt was justified in his resistance. I do not think he was justified; but, as the right hon. Baronet has quoted the great authorities of the party to which we belong, perhaps I may be permitted to cite the master of the school of which the right hon. Baronet is so distinguished a

\* December 22, 1783.—Mr. Erskine: Address not to dissolve the Parliament. Agreed to.

January 12, 1784.—Mr. Fox: For going into Committee on State of the Nation. Yeas 232; Noes 193—Majority 29.

Same day.—Lord Surry: Address for an Administration having confidence of House and public. Agreed to.—No division.

January 16.—Lord Charles Spencer: Resolution for removal of Ministers. Yeas 205; Noes 184—Majority 21.

January 23.—Mr. Pitt's East-India Bill. Yeas 214; Noes 222—Majority 8.

February 2.—Mr. Coke: Resolution against continuance of the Ministry. Yeas 223; Noes 204—Majority 19.

February 3.—Mr. Coke: To lay preceding resolution before the Crown. Yeas 211; Noes 187—Majority 24.

February 18.—Mr. Fox: To postpone supplies. Yeas 208; Noes 196—Majority 12.

February 20.—Mr. Eden (amendment to Mr. Powis): Address to Crown for Ministry having confidence of House, &c. Yeas 197; Noes 177—Majority 20.

Same day.—Mr. Fox: That above should be carried to Crown by whole House. Yeas 177; Noes 156—Majority 21.

February 25.—Lord Beauchamp: To adjourn House. Yeas 175; Noes 168—Majority 7.

March 1.—Mr. Fox: Address to Crown against continuance of Ministers in office. Yeas 201; Noes 189—Majority 12.

March 5.—Mr. Fox: Postponement of Mutiny Bill. Yeas 171; Noes 162—Majority 9.

March 8.—Mr. Fox: Representation to King. Yeas 191; Noes 190—Majority 1.

March 24.—Dissolution.

pupil and ornament—I mean, of course, Mr. Pitt himself. What said that great man on the occasion to which I have just alluded? He said this:—

“No man was more zealous or more unreserved in admitting and asserting the rights of the House to advise the Sovereign in the exercise of all his prerogatives than he was. This had always been a sentiment which he had avowed; but that a declaration on the part of the House of their disapprobation of his Majesty's Ministers should, *ipso facto*, in any given instance, bind and compel the Sovereign to dismiss those Ministers, or oblige them to resign, was a point which he never had admitted, and which he never would allow. Such a sentiment of disapprobation surely placed Ministers in awkward and unpleasant situations; but that it should force them to resign, he would maintain was an unconstitutional doctrine. It was,” (continued Mr. Pitt), “hostile to the prerogative of the Crown, and to that balance of power, on which the excellency of our Government depended. This was a point, therefore, which he was always ready to maintain, and from supporting which, he hoped, he would never be precluded by any false theories or vague declamation respecting the dignity of the House.”

And what was it that Mr. Pitt said on another and on a previous occasion?

“He hoped,” he said, “he should not give offence when he declared that a Minister might nevertheless, act constitutionally, by remaining in office after that House had declared their disapprobation of him. He begged pardon for what he was going to say; but he conceived that, accord to the constitution, the immediate appointment or removal of Ministers rested not with that House. There was, therefore, nothing illegal in a Minister's remaining in office after that House had declared against him, particularly where immediate resignation would have injured the country; and he hoped a public man might be supposed to act honourably when, upon public motives, he thought he best served his country by continuing in office after he had been so unfortunate as to lose the confidence of the House. He explained this, by declaring that there were acts of duty, not the less indispensable because they were disagreeable; that, in critical situations, it was incumbent on a Minister, who found he was not approved in that House, to look to the probable consequences of his immediately resigning. It behoved him to consider who were likely to be his successors, and whether the country might not receive more detriment than they could possibly derive advantage by his leaving it without any executive government, and thus making room for an Administration in whom the Crown, the Parliament, and the people could not equally repose confidence. He acknowledged, that the Minister who should lightly venture to encounter

the difficulty of holding his office against the consent of that House, would in all probability be made to repent of his levity; the necessity ought to be great, undoubtedly, since to attempt such an arduous matter, without the strongest reasons possible, would be rash, imprudent, and unjustifiable. There were circumstances, however, under which, he conceived, the meeting that difficulty with cheerfulness was far from reprehensible."

Such, Sir, was the defence made by Mr. Pitt for continuing in office under circumstances which Gentlemen opposite affect to consider somewhat similar to ours, although we have not had the misfortune to be defeated thirteen or fourteen times on votes of want of confidence; and I say, that if the right hon. Baronet appeals to Mr. Fox and Mr. Burke, we have a right to appeal to Mr. Pitt, according to whose recorded opinion there is nothing whatever unconstitutional in maintaining office after the Parliament has differed with the Minister. The right hon. Gentleman, in his address to the House, has been pleased to make several allusions to the measures that we put on the Table of the House the other day. He has stated, as a ground for declaring his want of confidence in us, that those measures are such as we could not hope to carry; and he particularly mentioned the repeal of the Corn-laws, and he asked whether we, or any person seriously could think, that in putting that particular question to the House we should carry it. Now, I beg leave to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this is to be the test by which a Ministry, or any political party, is to be tried? Have no measures been carried by the Ministers of the day, or by the opposing party, which at the time of bringing them forward there existed reasons for thinking could not be carried? Who at one time thought that the Catholic question could be carried? It was frequently urged as a taunt against those who brought forward and advocated that measure, that they had pledged themselves against its being made a Cabinet measure, and that they must know that it could not be carried. Why, who could be certain that it could be carried? It did so happen that that very question was afterwards carried by those who had been for years its most strenuous opponents. The right hon. Baronet himself, made it a Cabinet question. And, Sir, I should not be much surprised, after what I have seen, if the Corn-law question were made a Cabinet question by the right hon.

Gentleman too. I could read declarations as strong against the carrying of the Catholic question, made not only by the right hon. Baronet, but by a great many of those by whom he is now supported, as any thing which the right hon. Baronet has said against the repeal of the Corn-laws. Therefore I say in these days of wonder, I do not see any very great reason to make us think it altogether impossible that the right hon. Baronet may not himself make a Cabinet question of the repeal of the Corn-laws, and have every excuse for so doing. The right hon. Gentleman has taunted us with wishing an appeal to be made to the people at an inopportune time; but what degree of weight there is in the argument I cannot see. If we propose what we consider to be measures which would give the greatest possible relief to the suffering industry of the country, and those measures are opposed, and we think that the country are with us, is there any harm in having our schemes and reasons, and our principles fairly laid before the country? It seems to me there is not. Surely the agitation, if agitation there is to be, is no fault of ours. The question is a great fiscal question of "monopoly or no monopoly." It is a question whether or not we shall, by adopting a new scheme, relieve the industry of the country, and at the same time increase the revenue, and thereby render any additional burden on the people unnecessary; or whether the present system shall be maintained. That is to say, whether a reduction of duties shall take place, and thereby supply the deficiency of the revenue, or whether that deficiency shall be made up by the ordinary mode of imposing fresh taxes on the people. This is the point which the country have to determine. If the people feel a lively interest in the determination of this question, I cannot help it. If the industrious classes are anxious to remove the burdens they now labour under, and are desirous of eating cheaper bread and cheaper sugar, and of obtaining cheaper timber than they are now capable of obtaining, we cannot be held responsible for it; and if this strong wish for a reduction of the prices of those articles is agitation, and if the fact of asking the people whether or not they think that these fiscal schemes are right, and that they think we are doing our duty in proposing them is agitation—then I am afraid we must plead guilty to

having excited that agitation. But this is not, I beg leave to inform hon. Gentlemen opposite, a fault resting with us alone. I could quote very recent instances where agitation had been called in to bear upon elections. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman cheers out of place. I do not deny that agitation has been used for the purpose of acting on the feelings and prepossessions of the people on our side; but I do not see that any great backwardness has been evinced on that score by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I never saw, in my experience, any reluctance on their side to avail themselves of that mode of carrying any question which they advocated. The right hon. Baronet has said, now that the appeal is made, and now that we are to go to the country, that he shall not make any particular exposition of his principles. But when the right hon. Baronet came into office in 1834, he thought differently. He then thought it right to make an exposition of his political principles in his famous Tamworth Manifesto; at a time, too, when Parliament was not sitting. He did not then deem it improper to make an appeal to the country. And then, again, at a subsequent period, at the Mansion-house, he did not object to a mode of proceeding which he now seems so much to eschew;—and I recollect well that some things dropt from him on those occasions, which looked very like what the right hon. Baronet now calls “bidding for the favour [of the people:]” moreover, he did make so high a bidding, that I and my friends were at the time not a little apprehensive of the result. Now, however, he takes, and is to take, a totally different course. It is sufficient for him to oppose our propositions without stating what he himself would substitute for them. Such has not always been the language of the right hon. Baronet. When he stated his plan for removing the disabilities of the Catholics, upon moving, “That the House should resolve itself into a committee” upon that plan being objected to in many particulars, he, in reply to those objections, used these expressions:—

“I must say, that notwithstanding so much of this debate, has turned upon the observations I made last night, I have not yet heard an answer to the question I then put. If you do not like my proposal, what do you propose to do under the present circumstances? I am aware, that much may be said against my pro-

posal. My hon. Friend, the Member for Dublin (Mr. Moore), may give us an able disquisition on what passed in 1688; but depend upon it, that that is not sufficient in the present condition of the country. Something must be done, and what that something should be, is a question to which I have had no answer.”

At the conclusion of his speech, the right hon. Baronet said:—

“In conclusion, I only repeat, that I have yet heard no answer to my question. What other course can be pursued but that which I recommend? And this absence of an answer confirms me in the conviction, that the course I propose, is the only one that can be adopted.”

Now, her Majesty's Ministers are equally convinced, that what they proposed was for the best interests of the community, and were the best means of realizing a sufficient revenue for the exigencies of the State. They thought so; and so thinking, they embodied their principles in propositions which they laid before the House. And when they so acted, I certainly did think, notwithstanding the acknowledged talent of the right hon. Baronet, that he did not evade his own question, which I have just read, with any degree of success. A question, which might fairly be put to himself, “What do you propose?” It might be all very well to say, that the first object is to displace the Queen's Government; but if it is, has not the country a right to ask, upon what principles do you, Sir Robert Peel, propose to succeed to that Government? What course of policy will you pursue with respect to these great fiscal and commercial questions? The right hon. Baronet has taunted us with “oscillation”—I believe that was the word—uncertainty of purpose, I suppose he meant. I do not exactly know, what certainty of purpose can be found, either on the part of the right hon. Baronet, or his friends. Among other causes of our weakness, the right hon. Baronet alluded to the great variance of opinion, that prevails amongst us, and taunted us with not holding the same sentiments as many of our supporters. That may be; but let me ask him, whether I cannot find among those who now surround him, men entertaining the most extraordinary variety of opinions, and the greatest possible divergence of sentiments, upon almost all subjects of importance, that ever were seen congregated in the same party.



Why, I see now among the friends and supporters of the right hon. Baronet, men who were the advocates of the Catholic Relief Bill, in close conjunction with men who were its most strenuous opposers. I see some who were the earnest friends and framers of the Reform Bill, associating with Gentlemen who declared, that it was a measure that threatened destruction to the British constitution, and to the very existence of the empire. I see on those benches, the firmest supporters of the Poor-law Bill, in close adhesion with men who have denounced that measure as being cruel, unnatural, and execrable. I see men who were the authors of the Church Temporalities Bill for Ireland, sitting by the side of those who declared, that that measure was the first blow struck at the Irish national Church. I see the right hon. Baronet, who restored the golden standard of currency, backed by men who have asserted, that it was the source of misery and ruin to the country. I see many, who willingly came to a compromise on the Irish Municipal Reform Bill, not unwilling to associate themselves with those who prophesied that it would prove the severest blow, that ever was struck at the Protestant constitution of this empire. I also see amongst them, men who have voted for the suppression of Orange lodges as being illegal associations, while others are sitting with them, who have held high office in those societies. So also do I see those who have been the staunch upholders of the privileges of Parliament, quietly mingling themselves with men who have asserted, that the laws of the House were mere waste paper, when compared with decisions of courts of law. I see amongst those opposite to us, friends of the High Church, friends of the Low Church, friends of the New Church. In short, there is every shade of opinion represented on those benches, from men who uphold principles opposed to all that is popular and free in the country, to those who would ally themselves to the Chartists in order to secure political power. Such is the united body—such the harmonious elements of the party which is to succeed us in power. But it seems to me, that the right hon. Baronet cannot have the least chance with such materials (supposing he does not possess those other and more secret means, which no Minister at this time of day can be suspected of hav-

ing), of successfully conducting the Government of this country. But if such be the character of the party itself, permit me to turn now to the very distinguished Gentleman who leads that party—to the right hon. Baronet himself. The right hon. Gentleman has this night put us upon our trial—he will, I am sure, not complain if I say a few words in regard to his claims upon public confidence. Of his ability, it is idle and superfluous to say anything—too much of the time of this House has, in my opinion, been already consumed on that topic. No one doubts his capacity as a debater; the question rather turns upon the use which he has made of his acknowledged powers. In my view of his past conduct, his whole career seems to have been one of ineffectual resistance and unwilling concession. He has seldom taken up a position on any great question, dividing parties in later days, which he has not afterwards abandoned. He has attempted to swim against the current of public opinion, but has been beaten back, and has landed upon shoal after shoal, which has sunk under him, and been swept away. If he has been saved, he owes his safety to yielding to the tide, which he has passed the best part of his life in endeavouring to combat, and in vain. The right hon. Gentleman has not been the leader of events, he has been dragged onward by them. This may be his misfortune rather than his fault, but such is the fact. He has come too late with his political discoveries; he seems to me deficient in that sagacity which sees the signs of the times, and foresees the consequences of them; he, not unfrequently, does what is right, but after so long a delay, and in such a manner, that he generally fails to command the full esteem of his opponents, or to secure the sincere allegiance of his friends. Hence comes it, that with all his talents, all his opportunities, all his party following, I much fear he will never be a great Minister, far less a great man. Happy shall I be, if his future conduct and services shall contradict this prediction. Sir, the avowed object of this resolution, is a change of Ministers; and I have taken the liberty, I trust, without exceeding the limits prescribed for those who discuss the claims of their opponents, to ask what is the character of the party opposite, what the chances of their forming an efficient Government? I may also ask,

what is likely to be their policy? I will not go so far as the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Wakley), and say, that their policy will be exactly the same as ours, and that there will be no change of measures; but I will venture to assert, that let who will be in office, the affairs of this country will be administered, in all probability, much, I will not say altogether, on the principles which have guided our conduct. The systems of Government which were in vogue when the right hon. Baronet, and his friends near him, entered into public life, are inapplicable to these times; and if the Gentlemen opposite are to succeed us, they must either follow in our course, or their sway will be but of short duration, either in the country or the Parliament. The right hon. Baronet may be inclined, to a great extent, to take the right course; how he will be able to manage a party so strangely, not so strongly, united is another question; nor do I see how the country could contemplate such a change with any confidence of a beneficial result. The noble Lord, my late noble Friend, the Member for North Lancashire, speaking in the late debate, told us that we were "tottering to our fall." Be it so. I submit cheerfully: having risen to, and maintained this position with those near me, I am content to fall with them. I would, at any time, rather fall with my friends—with those with whom I have been long associated for the attainment of great public objects, than rise to any eminence, however lofty, by the help of antagonists to whom I have been bitterly opposed. Whatever may be the result of this discussion, (answering only for myself, and not presuming to speak for my colleagues), I can say that I have done my duty. I can conscientiously say, that, in becoming a party to bringing forward the great measures which are the chief pretexts for our overthrow, I did so with the solemn conviction that the time was come when the proposed change of system was not only just and prudent, but inevitable; and I am convinced, that we should have abandoned our duty to the House, to the country, and to ourselves, if we had not run the risk of recommending such measures for the sanction of Parliament. I am satisfied that the more these measures are examined, the more they will be approved. They are indeed only the development and sequel of a system of com-

mercial reform, recommended by great men of former days, who were then defamed for their innovations, but are now universally admired. Of this I feel as sure as of my existence—that these measures may be delayed, but cannot finally be destroyed. They will be the law of the land, whatever may be the fate of the Administration. We feel we have done what became us in bringing them forward, and we are firmly resolved to use every constitutional means in our power to carry them into effect.

Mr. *D'Israeli* began by applauding the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, for the course of his political conduct. Placed in an age of rapid civilisation and rapid transition, he had adapted the practical character of his measures to the condition of the times. When in power, he had never proposed a change which he did not carry, and when in opposition, he never forgot that he was at the head of the Conservative party. He had never employed his influence for factious purposes, and had never been stimulated in his exertions by a disordered desire of obtaining office; above all, he had never carried himself to the opposite benches by making propositions by which he was not ready to abide. Whether in or out of office, the right hon. Baronet had done his best to make the settlement of the new constitution of England work for the benefit of the present time and of posterity. He would advert to what had been said of the distinction between constitutional and official questions; in the former facts were open to all, and every man qualified by his studies to fill the station of a gentleman, would be just as well able to decide whether a Roman Catholic ought to be admitted to power as a Member of the Privy Council, or a Cabinet Minister. The case, however, was very different on questions of finance, for no man unacquainted with the secrets of office could be fully informed as to the resources of the country. Nor was what had been said, by the right hon. Baronet (Sir J. C. Hobhouse), respecting the reign of Sir Robert Walpole, more felicitous. He had recently visited the library of the house, and had informed himself of the facts of the history of the time. Sir Robert Walpole, though a Whig, was one of the ablest Ministers this country had ever known, and his followers might derive instruction from contemplating his

conduct. The question now before the House was this—was it, or was it not, important that there should be a clear understanding between the representative and the executive bodies? Such was not the language, but the import of the resolution. What then was the duty of a Government placed in the situation of the present servants of the Crown, unsupported as they were by a House of Commons elected under their own auspices? Two former Ministers had been in this predicament—Sir Robert Walpole and Lord North. No man contended that merely because a Government was in a minority in the House of Commons, that, therefore, it ought to resign. Next to the assumption of power, was the responsibility of relinquishing it. The year 1741, was the ominous year in which Sir Robert Walpole, was in the condition of the present Prime Minister. A Parliament had been summoned under his own auspices, but his address to the Crown was importantly amended, for the House of Commons would not sanction the words containing an approbation of the war. Sir Robert Walpole, did not resign because the implied censure related merely to the past. Then followed the choice of Chairman of election committees, next in consequence to the nomination of the Speaker; and here Sir Robert Walpole was in a minority of four. Still he did not resign. The Westminster election came next, and again the majority against the Ministers was four. The House adjourned for the Christmas recess, and when it re-assembled on the 18th of January, a motion was made on the subject of resignation, but Horace Walpole said, “My father will go on until the business of Government is arrested,” and, accordingly, Sir Robert Walpole remained at his post. What was the case with Lord North, in 1782? He too had a Parliament elected under his own auspices, and Mr. Fox brought forward a motion, of general censure on the conduct of the war, by moving for a committee to inquire into the conduct of the Admiralty. Lord North avoided a majority against him by refusing to come to a division, but when a similar motion was brought forward a few days afterwards, the Minister was defeated by a small majority. A few days subsequently, Lord North had a majority of seventeen, and on the celebrated address for putting an end to the American war, the Minister had

a majority of one. On that occasion, Mr. Pitt said that

“There was not a promise which had not been falsified—that shuffling and trickery pervaded the whole conduct of the cabinet, and that it was impossible for Parliament to place confidence in such a ministry.”

Yet Lord North would not quit office because he had a majority of one, and he was, nevertheless, acting less in the spirit of the constitution than Sir Robert Walpole, against whom there had been a majority of four, because “the business of Government was arrested.” Afterwards Mr. Fox gave a notice for Wednesday, and promised to bring forward the same motion on every Wednesday until Lord North retired. In the present instance there was, however, an additional circumstance, which would not be forgotten by the House, or by the country. He referred to the manner in which, for several Sessions, the Government had been carried on in the face of the resistance offered by a large majority in the other House of Parliament. The reformed House of Commons, proud of its new-fangled existence, and believing that all power would centre in itself, had permitted a minister of state to stigmatise a vote of the House of Lords as “the whisper of a faction.” But now the poisoned chalice was returned to their own lips. Those who had treated the House of Lords with insult were now treating the House of Commons with contempt. The fact was, that the Government was too full of that specious liberalism which they found it convenient periodically to assume; but in attacking aristocratic institutions, it had become the victim of a haughty and rapacious oligarchy. The present was not the first time the Whigs had been placed in this situation, and in the present day they had been obliged to reconstruct the House of Commons, and to conciliate the House of Lords. In one thing they had been consistent—in a systematic slight of our parliamentary institutions. They now governed the country, not only in spite of the House of Lords, but in spite of the House of Commons. What would be the consequence? Was it possible that these “apostles of liberty,” as they had been termed, should be found cringing in the ante-chambers of the palace, and now intended to support themselves in office, by clandestine and back-stairs influence? For himself, he had not the slightest

doubt that those who had twice tampered with the succession, would do so a third time if the occasion required it. The President of the Board of Control had given his opponents the consolation of his opinion, that if the present Ministers were removed, there was a prospect that their successors would form a strong Government. The career of her Majesty's present servants had been a singular one; they began by remodelling the House of Commons, and insulting the House of Lords; they then assaulted the Church—next the colonial constitutions; afterwards they assailed the municipalities of the kingdom, attacked the rich and the poor, and now, in their last moments, at one fell swoop, made war upon the colonial, commercial, and agricultural interests. Under these circumstances, he saw no reason why the party to which he belonged should despair, and the right hon. Baronet, who, according to the President of the Board of Control, was not a great man, and could not be a great Minister, might have the opportunity of establishing a Government, which would have the confidence of the education, the property, and he sincerely believed, the enlightened feeling of the great body of the nation. In that case the prophecy of the right hon. Gentleman would be falsified.

*Mr. T. B. Hobhouse:* Sir,—The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down ought to be the last to complain of the convenient use of liberalism, and to indulge in taunts and reproaches upon those who are opposed to him. He seems to have forgotten the time when he went down to High Wycombe with that convenient variety of opinions, which could allow him to be proposed by a Tory and seconded by a Radical, though it is difficult to tell by what good fortune he had managed to persuade the different parties that he was the friend of each. How the hon. Gentleman had been able to reconcile those opposite extremes is a mystery which he himself can alone explain. On that occasion the hon. Gentleman carried with him, as passports, two letters of recommendation, one from the hon. Member for Dublin and the other from the hon. Member for Kilkenny. It is therefore rather too much that he should now deal out insinuations against his antagonists. I shall now follow the hon. Gentleman through his historical researches, because I have no wish to compete with him as an

antiquary. The hon. Gentleman has said, that Ministers act in an unconstitutional manner in retaining power and seeking to bring forward those great measures upon which they have staked their character in the House of Commons. I, on the contrary, maintain, that Gentlemen opposite are acting an unconstitutional part, because they seek to deprive the Crown of its prerogative, and to prevent the people from expressing their wishes. Is the Crown to be told; that in a matter so important as the choice of its servants there is to be no appeal from this House to the country? And is the country of so little account that it ought not to pronounce judgment upon the conduct of its representatives in this new posture of public affairs? I hope that the people at large will look at the matter in this light. What right has any Gentleman to stand up in this House, which emanates from the people, and to say, that if a great public measure is submitted to us by the Ministers the country is not entitled to express an opinion upon it? The hon. Gentleman, as well as the right hon. Baronet who proposed the motion, has endeavoured to narrow the discussion upon it; but as the motion, if carried, must lead to the removal of Ministers or to a dissolution of Parliament, I am bound to take into account the whole conduct of the Ministry and not to give a vote upon some particular measures, which Gentlemen opposite may select as a convenient stalking-horse to power. Gentlemen wish to confine the question to certain points, because it does not suit their purpose to review the large and general benefits which the present Government has conferred upon the country. But a resolution of this nature cannot stand on such partial grounds. The hon. Gentlemen opposite make bold assertions but do not sustain them by facts. In what have my right hon. Friends acted so unconstitutionally? And, if the conduct of Ministers has been so criminal from first to last, a patriotic Opposition has been singularly negligent of its duty in not pronouncing a censure. True, they did attempt it once, but they signally failed. The right hon. Baronet who moved the resolution was very cautious of referring to the precedent of 1784 as not being analogous to the present case. He was wise to deny the analogy, because he knew that it would tell strongly in favour of his opponents. It is therefore not without reason that he

objects to the example of Mr. Pitt. True, there is no analogy between the conduct of Mr. Fox and that of the right hon. Baronet, for it originated in a different way. Mr. Fox had carried his India Bill through this House by a majority of two to one, and had been displaced by the interference of the Crown. The measures of Mr. Fox were therefore simply defensive, while those of the right hon. Baronet are as entirely aggressive. Besides, Mr. Fox did not come forward with a vote of censure grounded upon a particular measure, but he spoke out boldly, and said that the Ministry did not possess the confidence of the country, not as to this or that act, but as to their proceedings generally. Should the present motion be carried, the country will be placed in a most unfavourable position, and the House in a situation which every lover of liberty must regret. For suppose that my right hon. Friends do their duty—neither resign nor dissolve. At least, I hope that they will do neither one nor the other until they have brought forward the Corn-law question, then the hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they follow the precedent of 1784, and if they do not mean their motion to be a mere *brutum fulmen*, must go up with an address to the Crown. It is not for any one to anticipate the answer; but suppose the example set by George 3rd should be imitated, and the Crown should declare that there is no reason to remove the Ministers, in what a situation will the House then be placed, being brought into direct collision with the Crown, not upon great principles of public liberty, but upon selfish interests and a question of monopoly. What a spectacle will then be presented to a great nation, the Crown standing for liberty, and the House of Commons for monopoly! Such a state of things is not desirable, but it is inevitable, if the present motion should be carried. Already the organs of the Tories out of doors have proclaimed the intention of the party to follow up this resolution with an address and they are bound to take this course if they would not expose themselves to the derision of the country as the framers of an unmeaning motion a *telum umbelle sine ictu*. I am strongly opposed, Sir, to the resolution for another reason, because the object of it is, I believe, to stifle the discussion upon the Corn-laws. The right hon. Baronet dreads the embarrassment

of his party by a consideration of the question of the Corn-laws; he expects some difficulty in the attempt to force that monopoly down the throats of the people. Those who support the motion know that the party with whom I have the honour to act, are prepared with arguments on that subject of a most conclusive character. We do not flatter ourselves too much when we say that we can adduce reasons for a change which it is impossible to answer. [*"A laugh from the Opposition."*] Why, if hon. Gentlemen opposite, think that they are so strong in truth and justice upon this question, it is to their interest to have it submitted to the people; the greatest good will arise from the public discussion of it. The fact, however, is that they fear nothing so much as a debate upon a proposition so evident. Sir, I shall vote against the resolution of the right hon. Baronet, and I cannot but think that he has made a great mistake in bringing it forward. The object of it is to embarrass Ministers, but such, I trust, will not be the effect. If the other side succeed in this attempt, it may recoil upon themselves; if they fail, the tide of popular feeling will set doubly strong in favour of the present Government. A complaint has been made that Ministers wish to excite the public mind upon the Corn-law question, and then go to an election upon it. Why, what can agitate the public mind more than such party motions as the present? It has been stated, particularly by those hon. Gentlemen who come from manufacturing districts, that almost unparalleled distress prevails in the country; but the Ministry have proposed a plan by which the public will be considerably relieved, and an accession of revenue insured to the country. The hon. Gentlemen opposite have advanced no plan for securing those benefits, while they have not refrained from charging the Ministers with political delinquency, on account of the deficiency in the revenue, the greatest part of which, however, is attributable to the alteration of the postage duties, a vast moral, social, and intellectual improvement. If then, the accounts of the distressed condition of the country be true, and if no remedy be proposed but that which emanates from my right hon. Friends below me, I am almost compelled as it were, to adopt their measure, unless some hon. Gentleman will get up and

prove it to be wrong and propound a right one. Sir, if my voice can have any influence, I would warn the House not to plunge into a conflict with the Crown, which promises nothing but disgrace. I am sure that we shall gain no respect in the country, if contrary to past history, we exchange with the Crown our natural position as guardians of the people's rights. We may lose much, if we take upon ourselves to be the champions of monopoly, and leave to the Crown the defence of free trade. I shall reserve my opinions on the Corn-laws until that question comes before the House. I have always supported the repeal of those laws, and I shall still do so. I have also supported a reduction of the sugar duties, not because it was proposed by the Government, for I was one of the minority of twenty-seven, who voted for the motion of the hon. Member for Wigan last year, but because I think we are in a situation in which either a new tax must be levied on the people, or a reduction of import duties to an amount sufficient for the purpose must be made, so as to improve the trade and commerce of the country. I am convinced Sir, that the triumph in the present conflict will ultimately be in favour of free trade, and of that commercial system which the circumstances of the country, no less than those of the Treasury demand.

Mr. *D'Israeli* was understood to explain, that his principles, at this moment, were exactly the same as when he was formerly a candidate at High Wycomb, and carried down with him letters of recommendation from Mr. O'Connell and Mr. Hume.

Mr. *Liddell* said, the hon. Member had attacked the Members on the opposition side of the House, as being opposed to the prerogatives of the Crown, while the Government had shewn itself utterly unable to maintain the prerogative of the Crown on the recent occasion of the motion made by the hon. Member for Finsbury for the liberation of Chartist prisoners, against which motion the Ministers could not muster more than twenty-eight Members, and were supported by thirty from the Opposition side of the House; and had it not been for the casting vote given by the Speaker, in support of the prerogative of the Crown, it must have been interfered with, in spite of the Ministers of the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman, the

President of the Board of Control, had spoken with triumph of what he designated the triumph of the Government during the course of this very Session, in having carried the principle of the Irish Registration Bill. What a sorry source of satisfaction to the Government? One of its leading Members had admitted, that the very principle of it was the maintenance of a 5*l.* franchise for Ireland. They certainly did carry the second reading by a majority of five. What was the result? Did they bring their bill to a successful issue? Did they abide by what they described as the main principle of the bill? Did they not, on the contrary, with their usual abandonment of principle, abandon the principle of the bill, and, after suffering this stigma, were they not absolutely defeated, and had they not abandoned this measure, like so many others? And yet the right hon. the President of the Board of Control said, "We carried the principle of our Irish Registration Bill." All that the right hon. Gentleman would admit was, their defeat on the Sugar Duties Bill. Now, this was the first great portion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's financial projects; and it was therefore a defeat of so much consequence, as to render utterly nugatory his whole financial scheme. The noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, had thought fit to apologize for his inconsistency on this occasion. He declared that he had opposed the Government only upon narrow grounds. Their budget a narrow ground! Did the Government themselves think it so? Was that a narrow ground, upon which they had arrayed all the great interests of this country in deadly conflict, set the manufacturing against the agricultural classes, and put the shipping and colonial interests in a perfect ferment? It was upon this very "narrow ground," that, relying upon popular feeling for their support, they had determined on taking the extreme measure of dissolving their own Parliament. The noble Lord had talked of their exertions in favour of reform. He would find this allusion rather a stale attempt to excite public sympathy. The people now knew well what they had to expect from the operation of that bill; and those very men who had been most clamorous for "the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill," were those who expressed themselves now most dissatisfied with its re-

sults, and insisted on the five points of the people's Charter. He (Mr. Liddell) had never given a vote with a clearer conviction of its necessity. Had her Majesty's present Ministers the confidence of the people of this country? Had no public inconvenience ensued from their imbecility? Had no question been unsettled by their hesitation, and permitted still to continue unsettled? Did the House remember their various defeats during the last Session of Parliament—defeats so numerous, that their details almost escaped the recollection? Did the House remember the various "open questions" which had been made by the present Cabinet? What did the country think of the mode in which the Corn-laws had been treated by them during the whole of this Parliament? What of their making the ballot an open question? What of their mode of dealing with the Poor-law Bill, which the noble Lord had declared to be essential to the welfare of the community? How did he propose to get rid of the existing difficulties? Did he propose that the powers of the commissioners should expire at the end of the present year, without renewal? If he considered it "essential to the welfare of the community," how could he justify his abandonment of that important measure without bringing it to an issue? Nor was this all. Would the country not remember the failure of the education scheme of the Government, the abandonment of their proposition respecting Church-rates, and, above all, did they not remember that the Government had proposed and carried a motion for a Committee on Church-leases, involving the most important interests, which Committee had produced a most distinct report, with various recommendations, which the Government, to its disgrace and shame be it spoken, had totally neglected, and left these vital interests in the same unsettled state? Was there no other point on which the Government had manifested culpable weakness and imbecility? There was their abandonment of the revenue derived from the Post-office, which took place in consequence of the recommendation of Members composing the Radical section of the House. Upon their recommendation—their threats, he might say—Ministers had consented to sweep away 1,200,000*l.* of revenue, and had come forward in the following Session with an alteration of the whole financial

system of the country, involving the risk of the greatest possible public commotion, by dissolving Parliament on such a question. All this had resulted from the weakness and imbecility of the Government, and these were evils from which they were bound to relieve themselves. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had at length brought forward this resolution, in a shape in which he felt assured, that the House would aid him in carrying it—a resolution which he trusted would have the effect of expelling them at once from their seats. The extreme remedy to which they had announced their intention of resorting—that of dissolving the Parliament—could be justified only, according to his humble apprehension, where there was a distinct expression on the part of the country, and a decided conviction in the minds of Ministers themselves that the opinions of the country and the House of Commons were at variance, and that the measures of Ministers did meet with the approval of the country. In such a case any Government would be perfectly justified in having recourse to an expression of the distinct opinion of the country. But what was the evidence? Was it to the late elections they looked for that evidence? Was it to the counties, where they had been beat by majorities, not of hundreds, but almost of thousands? Was it to their own towns? to those which were commonly called Government boroughs, where they had sustained their last defeats? Or was it to the great manufacturing town of Nottingham, which had so lately returned to Parliament his hon. Friend who then sat behind him? What right had the Government to say, that the country was with them, when these examples were before their eyes? All their efforts to stem the tide of opposition had failed; and if, under such circumstances, they continued in office on the one hand, or dissolved the Parliament on the other, he conceived, that they would most grossly belie their duty to their Sovereign and their country, and merit condign punishment. He did not suppose, that even any one of themselves, though he had no very high opinion of their principles, would resort to a dissolution of Parliament, unless he *bona fide* believed that the feelings of the country were along with them. He could not suppose them possibly so lost to every notion of sound principle and loyalty as to have

recourse to a dissolution of Parliament merely for the purpose of getting up an agitation in the country. They had been beaten within a very short period upon two great measures, one for the introduction of a complete change in the elective franchise in Ireland, the other the great financial measure of the Session. After these defeats, could they pretend to say, that they possessed the confidence of the House, or that, having lost the first item of their budget, they would be able to carry the second? Would the noble Lord propose his alteration of the timber duties after the distinct opinion which had been given by Lord Sydenham? Did the noble Lord pretend to imagine, that if he failed in that, he would succeed in the question of the corn laws? The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, was taunted because he held out no pledge to the country of his intentions on this subject. But he had said all that it was necessary for him to say—all that any man had a right to expect or reason to hope for. He had put the question on most distinct and intelligible grounds. The Government said, "We advocate a fixed duty." The right hon. Baronet said, "I maintain the principle of the sliding scale." As to the amount at which the sliding scale was to be set, the noble Secretary for foreign affairs had talked of the "sliding scale," as "a slippery thing;" but did any one in that House venture to say that the existing scale was the very best that could possibly be adopted? He, for one was pledged always to support the existing system; but he did not hold the present scale to be a very advantageous one. He had always lamented that the Corn-law prepared by Mr. Canning should have been altered. He would have most willingly seen it carried into effect. Speaking as the independent representative of a community engaged in shipping, mercantile and agricultural pursuits, he had no hesitation in saying, that he did not consider the present scale by any means the most desirable one; and he would support a reduction in it, if brought forward by a Government to which he should be disposed to give his confidence. It was unfair to taunt the right hon. Baronet who was too wise to commit himself upon points of detail. But he had fairly spoken out in favour of the sliding scale. Mr. Huskisson, author of the existing Corn-laws, made this memorable declaration—

"So convinced am I of the value of the shipping interests, with reference to the safety of this great empire, that in all questions where the interests of our commerce and our ships directly clash, I, for one will always be prepared to give due consideration to the shipping interests."

He felt strongly that the present position of the Government called for a change in the administration of public affairs. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had not ill estimated the feelings of the country, nor the strength, unanimity, and zeal of his supporters in that House, in bringing forward the present motion. He considered, that the circumstances of the times required a vote of want of confidence, the effect of which would be to bring the Crown and the people of this country more into harmony than they had been since the accession of her present Majesty, and to rid them effectually of one of the worst and weakest Governments that ever had held the reins of power.

Sir *Hesketh Fleetwood* had to appeal to the House for a favourable hearing whilst he addressed them on a question of such immense importance as a vote of want of confidence in her Majesty's Government, and as he had never troubled the House with a speech during the present Session, he trusted the House would feel, that as the representative of a constituency so important and increasing as that of the town of Preston, which had been already alluded to in the course of the recent debate; when he had received letter after letter, and memorial after memorial, calling upon him to express the feelings of his constituents, he had some claim on its attention whilst he spoke on behalf of a large, and more especially, on behalf of a suffering constituency. He was glad, that the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Finsbury, was in his place, because, identified as they both were with the county of Lancaster, they would be better able to understand its true state. And here he must observe, that when the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Finsbury, addressed the House the other night, and stated, that if the right hon. Baronet brought forward better measures than those of the present Government, he should have the hon. Members support, he, for one, fully agreed in the hon. Member's views, and declared, that he for one was perfectly willing to hear the right hon.



Gentleman's measures propounded, and if they were good, he was as ready to give them his vote, as freely as he had voted on former occasions, not for any particular interest or party, but for the general benefit of the country. The right hon. Baronet had introduced together the subjects of the Poor-law and the Corn-law, now every vote which he had given had been against the Poor-law, and when the right hon. Gentleman regretted, that the Poor-law had been put aside, alleging as a reason, the fear of a dissolution; and when the right hon. Gentleman said, that the Corn-law had been brought forward to serve the same end, he (Sir H. Fleetwood) was glad to be able to state, that if the Poor-law was disliked, the Corn-law was equally hated. For himself, he derived the principal portion of his income from land, and yet he had invariably supported an alteration in the present Corn-laws, because he had ever felt, that they were imposing a tax to alter the disposition of Providence, and that, with whatever good feeling they had been framed, they had never been carried out beneficially, even for those for whose assistance they were designed; and it was a fortunate thing for the unrepresented portion of the people of this country, that measures not founded on correct principles could never be carried out for the benefit of the class for which they were intended, and still less for the benefit of the community at large. He hoped that the Corn-laws, and all the other measures propounded by her Majesty's Government would be fairly discussed, for he was convinced, that the more every question connected with the well-being of the country was debated, the better would it be understood by that House and the country. It was the more important upon the present occasion, because such a crisis as this had never before existed in this country. This was the only time on which they were to enter upon the general distinction between free and restricted trade. He had often represented to the Members of the Government the difficulty under which Members who supported them were placed when they went to their constituents. There were numbers of cases on questions between the people and the privileged classes, in which the Government left those by whom they were generally supported, and threw themselves into the hands of the privileged classes. This was, perhaps, the first in-

stance in which the Government had taken the lead in measures that would conduce to the advantage of the general body, as contradistinguished from privileged and particular classes, and if this vote of want of confidence were to be carried, surely it would be telling every one who had not a vote for Members of that House, "you see, that so long as the two parties that rule this country are only separated among themselves so far as not to prevent particular classes from being supported by particular majorities, all goes on well; but so soon as either party oversteps this recognised line, he is met with a vote of want of confidence." He thought, that the present motion had been brought forward by the right hon. Baronet at a period the most opportune, and he believed, that there could have been no better means taken to put the country fairly in possession of the principles on which the Government had acted, than the speeches delivered by the right hon. Baronet this evening, and also upon the occasion of the former debate which had taken place upon the proposition of the Government with regard to the sugar duties. The Government had endeavoured to raise that amount which was called for to supply the deficiency in the revenue by means the most favourable to the people. They had sought to procure the amount required in such a way as, that while the burdens of the people were not increased, they should at the same time be placed in a better situation than that in which they had hitherto stood, and if ever there was a system to which it was unfit that such a vote as that now proposed should be applied, it was that which had so recently been advocated by her Majesty's Ministers. He was fully aware of the importance of avoiding all discussions upon the Corn-laws to hon. Gentlemen opposite, because he was aware, that the general knowledge of that question, together with a full acquaintance with the principles of those hon. Gentlemen, would in all probability have the effect of placing many gentlemen in that House who did not now enjoy seats in it, in lieu of many of those hon. Gentlemen; and without reference to the holding of office by one Government or by another, he thought, that it would be highly advantageous to the House, generally, that the country should have an opportunity of showing the opinion which was generally entertained by

those upon the questions at present at issue. This Parliament had already lasted during a period of four years, and he was one of those who had always supported the principle of shorter Parliaments. He had never objected to go to his constituents, and he thought, that the same feeling should pervade the House, for if the conduct of hon. Members in that House should be considered as right, there was no doubt that they would be again returned; but if it should be considered as erroneous, they would be compelled to give way to others more consistent than themselves, and the sooner that took place, under such circumstances, the better. The present crisis was entirely different from any which had occurred; it was one, whether the new principle of free trade which was advocated should be adopted. Hon. Gentleman opposite, with whom he had spoken upon this subject, had said to him, "We do not like the present Government—we wish them out, but while we do so, we cannot deny, that we should be ready to agree to the measures which they propose if we were in power, but we do not put confidence in the Government." [*Cheers.*] He was glad to hear these sentiments expressed, because those hon. Gentlemen had never before advocated such measures, and when they cheered what he related as having been described as their sentiments, they in effect cheered a vote of want of confidence in themselves for having neglected to do that which they said ought to have been done. All they said was, "You have introduced a measure which we meant to have introduced; you have forestalled us; you have been in office a long while, and have asked our advice upon all the measures which you have brought forward, but we never thought, that without doing so, you would take that very step, which, if we had got into office, we intended to take." He believed, that the country would fully understand, that this was the line of argument of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but he begged to ask, if any feelings of opposition existed, what right the Government had to attempt to come to any conclusion, until they had first consulted the opinions and feelings of the country? The right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel) had spoken of the etiquette which existed in the House with regard to the conduct of Ministers. Certainly, after having read in the notice of the motion of the right hon. Baronet, that

that conduct was contrary to constitutional principles, he had been surprised to hear such language held. The right hon. Baronet had opened his speech with a line of argument to which he had listened with the greatest delight, but he had gone beyond what he considered the constitutional right of the House of Commons. He said—"I speak not of Queen, Lords, and Commons, but of the Parliamentary usage connected with majorities and minorities in this House." It might be very right to have constitutional principles upon which that House should be guided; but if the acts of that House were to be looked at as being paramount in showing the mode of proceeding to be adopted, he might go back to a time when an ancestor of his own was connected with that House, when the mace was taken from the table of that House, and when he heard statements going so far as those which had been made, he could not but feel that he heard constitutional doctrines proposed which were at variance with what he had considered to be connected with the powers of that House. Upon one point he might he might appeal to the House with perfect confidence in his own knowledge of the truth of what he was about to say. The state of trade in Preston, which place he had the honour to represent, was most cramped and miserable, and he had the authority of a supporter of the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, for saying so, as well as his own knowledge of the fact, and it was quite impossible that the inhabitants of that place should go on, so as to be able to compete with foreign trade, unless something was done; and his regret was this, that individuals should be found on both sides of the House whose feelings in favour of the well being of the country gave way to the peculiar condition of parties, and who sunk the real interests of the country, to give place to the fights and quarrels of faction. With regard to the Poor-law, he would make one observation. The noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies had brought in the Poor-law Bill, and it had been always supported by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth. An allusion had been made in his presence to the state of the towns of Nottingham and Bradford, in the former of which the system of out-door relief was not acted upon, while in the latter, that system had been adopted. He had asked the reason

of that difference, and the answer was, that in Bradford there had been a riot; in Nottingham there had been none; and he mentioned this in order that the country might be aware of the fact, that while one Member of the Conservative party supported the one system, another Member might present himself to his electors upon the other, and that, as an election might be shortly expected to occur, they might be aware from what causes results might be naturally expected. He was an agriculturist to a large extent, in Lancashire, and he would say, that if there was any alteration in the Corn-laws, he would be ready to take his tenant's leases off their hands, and take their stock also at a fair valuation. He was satisfied that his farmers would produce him more under a different system of commercial regulation than under the present protective duties.

Mr. Walter said, that as his reasons for supporting the present motion might partake of a character different from those of other Gentlemen, he thought it his duty briefly to address the House. He had already intimated that he was not altogether opposed to portions of the new financial scheme of Ministers, but as he then stated having conversed with many competent judges of such matters, who were even friendly to the principles now assumed by the Ministry, he had learnt that there was no confidence in these new fiscal projects of increasing the revenue by the remission of taxation, no hopes of a beneficial result placed in them, in consequence of the abrupt and hasty manner in which they had sprung up. It was obvious that they had no deep root in the minds of those who brought them forward, they were a series of expedients, not *bona fide* and well-digested plans, but, as it were, the mere promises of a political death-bed repentance. As the sugar question was, for the present disposed of, he should advert only to the change proposed in the Corn-laws; and as all parties regarded with respect the opinions of the late Mr. Huskisson on that subject, he might be allowed to present some of those opinions to the House. Mr. Huskisson said, in March, 1828—

"The hon. Member for Somersetshire professed himself pleased with the law of 1815. He could only say to that hon. Member, that he lamented from the bottom of his soul the mass of evil and misery, and destruction of capital, which that law, in the course of its twelve

years' operation, had produced; and he did believe he could make it distinctly appear, if the moment were a proper one, that the effect of the bill, as far as regarded the agriculturists themselves, had been to keep prices of produce lower for those twelve years than they could have been, even if the trade in corn had been free."

Mr. Huskisson he believed, had never regarded the present arrangement as a final measure. There was another authority also, which showed very justly from what cause much of the evil of which agriculturists complained originally sprung. Lord Liverpool said, in May, 1820—

"The misfortune of the agriculturists was, not that too little, but that too much waste land had been cultivated—a misfortune (be it observed he called it a misfortune) which had arisen out of the high price of corn during the war. He positively knew that this was the source of the mischief, and that it had led to the breaking up of several waste lands, which had previously been used at a small price for several useful purposes. More than one half of the individuals who had given their attention to this subject were of opinion, that if the capital which had been expended on the new land had been expended upon the old, it would have produced a much greater advantage to the community at large. He himself thought that if they were to proceed to cultivate more waste land, they would double, treble, quadruple, nay, quintuple all the present agricultural distress."

It was not, therefore, on account of the corn proposition of the Ministers that he voted in the manner he should do, but on account of a general want of confidence in them, and a perfect conviction which he felt that they were not in earnest, but merely making a dying struggle to retain their power. Indeed, if they had been in earnest, why had they reserved important measures like these to the present crisis? Various acts of theirs had been assigned for their loss of the confidence of the people. The half-abortive infliction of the rural police was one just cause; and he might add their improper, but too successful attempt, to extend the privileges of that House unconstitutionally. He had been sent to that House almost expressly by a very important constituency, not merely by Conservatives and Chartists, but by many consistent Whigs also, to reprehend their course, and, if possible, to make them retread their steps, with respect to another justly odious and unconstitutional measure. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had stated, that he did not

mean now to pursue his New Poor-law; while, at the same time, he intimated, that if he had the power he would renew it. Hence he (Mr. Walter) should labour to prevent the noble Lord from retaining the power which he would so noxiously employ. He would oppose the measure in any hands, still more in those of the authors of the bill. He was prevented from going into detail on this measure, by the course which the noble Lord had pursued; but still, as his (Mr. Walter's) want of confidence mainly proceeded from that measure, he might be allowed to say a few words to justify such feelings, and the vote which he should in consequence give. That he should doubt the professions of the authors of the bill, would appear to be very natural when he showed how grievously they had swerved from previous assurances given with respect to the manner in which they would enforce it. "It would be absurd," said Lord Althorp, "to suppose that the bill meant to sanction a general system of workhouses." They had erected about 700 workhouses; and he had seen one in a half-finished state at Nottingham, built to contain 1,500 persons. Lord Althorp added, "That if the bill were to say, that now, or at any future time, relief should not be given out of the workhouse, it would go a great deal too far, and would be attended with bad consequences." The Whig Chancellor of the day also asserted, that "No one ever entertained the intention, or even a dream or imagination, of separating husband from wife, or parent from child." There had not, indeed, with respect to this bill, been one single promise or profession made by the Government, which they had not violated. How, then, could any rational man believe their present professions? Even if that were the fit occasion, it would be difficult to say anything new on the subject of the Poor Bill, except the fact of its unmitigated odiousness; and if it was the duty of the people, as no doubt it was, to submit to any law, so long as it was law, however revolting might be its provisions, it was certainly not the policy of any Legislature to put that duty to so severe a test and proof as it was now doing, by setting the feelings of nature and humanity in opposition to the principle of legal submission. A noble Lord (Lord Stanley) whose speech in that House would not soon be forgotten, had charged the Mem-

bers of the present Administration with setting numbers to wage war against property. What did the Poor-law do? It, in fact, did that which the noble Lord spoke of the other night as so fearful a mischief. It set the lower orders—it set numbers at war against property. But let it be recollected who it was that had struck the first blow; not numbers; they were resting quietly in their position. Property gave the stroke to crush numbers lower and lower. Let property beware of the second blow; it would come from the other party; and let it be remembered, that it was the second blow that made the battle. But if the New Poor-law was a good measure—if it were consistent with the general principles of a free Government—if it had communicated peace and comfort to the population of the country, then, he said, the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, deserved thanks and admiration for his internal policy. The country was more obliged to him than to any man in public life. His supporters might well consider all opposition to so great a Minister as factious. He, however, who certainly had gained nothing by his opinions, but, on the contrary, had made great sacrifices by supporting them, thought that this measure was the reverse of all that he had thus stated hypothetically, that it was tyrannical, cruel, and unconstitutional; and, therefore the noble Lord had his decided opposition. There was now a general belief in the necessity of a new Administration. He certainly felt the conviction that the present was totally incompetent to manage the affairs of the country. Personally, he cared not who might be their successors: but, be they who they might, they might rest assured, that if they upheld the present Poor-law, they would commence their Administration under that public feeling, with which the present Ministers would close theirs, namely, with being odious to the country. Before he sat down, he would say a word or two on the subject of the proposition made two nights ago to address the Crown in favour of certain political offenders. That proposition had been this night again animadverted upon. He trusted, that he should always be as anxious to maintain the prerogatives of the Crown as the just rights of the people. He would not detain the House by a justification of his own vote on that occasion, but he would just mention, that a pro-

position of a similar nature, made a few years ago for the remission of the sentence on Mr. Hunt, was supported by Lord Duncannon, Lord Brougham, Lord Ebrington, Dr. Lushington, Mr. Maule, Lord Normanby, Lord Stanley, the Marquesses of Tavistock and Titchfield, Sir Francis Burdett, and by the present Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, Lord Denman.

Mr. *Macaulay* felt called upon, in the first instance, to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the support which he had just received to his motion by the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, who stated that he should vote for it, not on allegations previously stated on the opposite side, but on grounds completely contradictory to any which had been urged by the right hon. Baronet. The hon. Member said, that the principles on which he was prepared to vote for the motion, and to withhold his confidence from the Government, rested, in the first instance, on the Government's support of the question of privilege last year, and in defence of which the right hon. Baronet distinguished himself more than any other Member of the House; and, secondly, on their introducing and continuing the New Poor-law Bill, of which measure the right hon. Baronet, much to his honour, was a most strong and zealous supporter. He did not rise for the purpose of dwelling on these discrepancies, but for the purpose of following and answering some particular parts of the right hon. Baronet's speech, to which hitherto no allusion had been made by hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House. He would endeavour to compress what he had to say into as narrow limits as possible. He must, then, at once express some little surprise at the form of the present motion. If the right hon. Baronet had chosen to assert the principle that the present Government had not the confidence of the House of Commons, there might be some argument for his motion; but then he did not adduce an argument for the great constitutional question which was lying behind the first assertion in his resolution. As far as he had observed, the conduct of the right hon. Baronet, it appeared to him that he was generally against the assertion of any general principle which applied not only to any particular question, but to any other case that might arise. But in this resolution—this judicial resolution—he de-

parted from his usual course, for he thought fit to lay down a general principle as to what was in conformity with the spirit of the constitution. He believed, that it was no light matter for that House to pledge itself on its journals that one or the other course was in conformity with the spirit of the constitution. It was a serious matter for that House to come to any such resolution; for if any particular men acted upon the spirit of it the greatest inconvenience might ensue. He said this with confidence; for, if in any pressing emergency, or under circumstances of difficulty, the spirit of the constitution was violated and departed from by any public men, and if the House felt justified in sanctioning the proceeding, then they must determine that the opinion of the House, as contained in the resolution, was null and void. If, therefore, the House agreed to a resolution proposed by the right hon. Baronet, that the present Administration did not possess nor deserve, the confidence of the House of Commons, and that, therefore, it should be instantly removed, he could understand and appreciate the course of proceeding; but then the House would not fall into the error which the right hon. Baronet had done, in laying down what he believed to be nothing more nor less than a political dogma. The truth was, that the right hon. Baronet had mixed up the major part of his proposition with the minor. The major part of the proposition was, that her Majesty's Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry through the House measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare, and the minor portion of the proposition was, that their continuance in office, under such circumstances, was at variance with the spirit of the constitution. On the latter point, he would join issue with the right hon. Baronet, and he thought that he had good and conclusive ground for asserting that the House should not agree to this part of the resolution. But, first of all, with respect to the declaratory part. He thought that it was in the highest degree against the spirit of the constitution to sanction such a proposition. He could readily believe a state of things when such conduct as was impugned in this resolution was inevitable—when a state of things might arise from which there was no other possibility of

escape—when a state of things might occur in the country which rendered the proceeding necessary—and he believed that almost at the present moment there was such a state of things in this country as to render any other course, if not impossible, a matter of the greatest difficulty. He believed that the right hon. Gentleman's proposition might be met with a *reductio ad absurdum*. The proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, he contended, must, in certain states of parties, be violated by all governments. Take a plain and simple deduction from what had occurred, and was likely to occur again. There were 658 Members of that House. What security was there in the constitution of the country against their bringing forward propositions which the House would not support by a large majority? For instance, on any question, there might be 320 strong and zealous Tories or Conservatives on the one side, and 320 strong and zealous Reformers, or supporters of the present Government on the other—and suppose, also, that there were seventeen or eighteen Gentlemen who objected to the strong opinions of either party, and were adverse to adopt either of the extreme opinions that might be proposed. Under these circumstances, in what manner would the right hon. Gentleman secure a majority? And under such a state of things, if this resolution was to be adopted and acted upon by the House, how would the Government be carried on? Was this, he would ask, an impossible, nay, an improbable state of things? Take in the present Parliament the question of the Irish registration of voters. This was a question of the greatest importance, and involved the most momentous considerations. Whatever differences of opinion were involved on the subject, both sides, he was sure, would as once admit, that it was a matter of very great importance, as it was a question, which, to a certain extent, involved the constitution of that House, and on the principle on which it was determined depended the return of nearly one sixth of the Members of that House. The House was divided into two great parties on this subject, and they very nearly balanced each other. The one party had at its head the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, the other supported the views of her Majesty's Ministers on this subject. The opinion also entertained by the opposite parties as to

the measures of their opponents was strong in the extreme. The noble Lord and his Friends entertained the opinion, that the adoption of the proposition of the Government, with respect to the Irish constituency, would be swamping the present *bond fide* constituency in that country, and that the addition proposed to it by the Government was an approach to the adoption of universal suffrage. On the other hand, many Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House regarded the measures of the noble Lord on this subject as little better than proposals for the general disfranchisement, and for almost the annihilation of the body of voters in Ireland which existed at the present moment. The difference of opinion was here fundamental and undeniable. Between these two great parties, however, there was a small body of Members who entertained both extreme opinions of neither; this body although small in numbers, was most respectable for its talents, but by their votes and influence were enabled to prevent either party succeeding in its measures. What were the circumstances that had arisen during the contests on this subject? Last year the noble Lord proposed his bill, and it was opposed, but opposed in vain, by the Government. He succeeded in getting it into committee, but when there, almost on the first division, the noble Lord was defeated in a clause which he considered a most essential part of his bill. The noble Lord was defeated on a part of his bill, which he considered the great blemish of it, and it was clear to his mind, that if the noble Lord had not abandoned it, he would have had no chance of carrying it during the present year; the plan of the Government had been entertained by the House on its second reading, but on going into committee, it was defeated on one of its essential principles, and was, therefore, abandoned, and thus the matter at present stood, and neither party could succeed in carrying its measures. Might not similar difficulties and the same proceeding arise on other questions of importance, and above all on those of a fiscal character? for what finance question could be proposed which did not affect some interest or other, and which, if proposed, would not for the time throw that particular interest so affected, into opposition? in such a case, when the adverse parties in the House were nearly divided, any Minister might be embarrassed and

thwarted in his views. He did not hesitate to assert, that if the right hon. Baronet had been in office, and the House had been constituted and divided as the present was, and he had brought in a Budget and without attempting to guess what his plan might be—he would have had to encounter difficulties as great as those the present Government had had to contend with. The question, then, resolved itself into this—whether, in a very nearly balanced House of Commons, the principle laid down by the right hon. Gentleman should be abandoned, or whether they should have no Government at all. There was no provision in the constitution to prevent the electors returning 329 Members on each side. The decision of this matter rested with the constituency, and the House could not have any influence in the result. He therefore contended, that the right hon. Gentleman's course in declaring that this state of things was contrary to the spirit of the constitution, involved the proposition, that in certain states of things in this country, we must inevitably be left without a Government. These were the grounds, why, on general reasons, he characterised the motion of the right hon. Gentleman as contradictory and impracticable. Then, again, he felt, that in the position which he had taken, he was fortified by the proceedings in the best time of our history, and by the doctrines laid down by the best authorities on constitutional matters. It was the first duty of the Ministers of the Crown to administer the existing law. If the House of Commons did not place sufficient confidence in the Government for this purpose, it might express its opinion, either indirectly by the rejection of all the propositions of the Administration, or directly, as was the case in the instance alluded to by the right hon. Baronet, Sir Robert Walpole. The proceedings in either case sufficiently marked the want of confidence of the House of Commons in the Government. Under such circumstances, there was only the one or other constitutional course to pursue—namely, either to retire from office, or to dissolve the Parliament. He denied, however, that it could be called a want of confidence, if the House withheld its assent from any new legislative measure, or refused to sanction the alteration of an old law. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, alluded to several events that had occurred since the

accession of the House of Hanover to the throne of this country, and had stated, that all the instances justified the course he had then taken. He, however, must take the liberty of referring to some instances which would not have met the views of the right hon. Baronet. What had been the conduct of previous Governments on the rejection of new measures propounded by themselves, and which had been rejected by Parliament? In the first instance, did the right hon. Baronet forget the conduct pursued by Lord Sunderland and Lord Stanhope on the Peerage Bill? He did not know whether the noble Lord, the descendant of Lord Stanhope, was present; but he knew that his noble Friend was, on all occasions ready and prepared to defend his illustrious ancestor, and he would appeal to him, in perfect confidence, as to the conduct of that distinguished statesman, on the occasion to which he referred. Had any measure more important ever been brought before Parliament than that during the government of Lords Sunderland and Stanhope, with respect to the peerage? The proposition was, to confine the prerogative of the Crown to the then number of peers, and to allow only an addition of six more to the number. That measure was introduced into the other House, after a recommendation from the Throne; and although it met with the general approbation of the other House, it was almost unanimously rejected by the House of Commons. Did Lord Stanhope then resign? Did any one in opposition to the Government, call upon him to resign? He was sure, if any such demand had been made, that the answer of either Lord Stanhope, or Lord Sunderland would have been—"What, give up the seals of office at the present time, and let the Jacobites in"? He was sure that the right hon. Baronet would not, for a moment, imagine that he intended any offensive allusion. The reply, then, of those great statesmen would have been, "What! in such a moment abandon our offices, and let men into power whom we believe to be concealed traitors?"—of men, whose first proceeding would probably be to repeal the Toleration Act, and revive the bill against Occasional Conformity, and who would render every aid in their power in support of the Pretender? Neither Lords Stanhope nor Sunderland gave way, and resigned in consequence of the rejection

of the Peerage Bill, and he thought that they were perfectly right, and were justified in the course which they took. Again, Mr. Pitt followed a nearly similar course in 1786. This case was rather stronger than the former, for, in consequence of the influence of the then Duke of Richmond with the Government, Mr. Pitt, as Minister, was induced to bring forward a proposition for the general fortification of the coasts. This was shortly after the American war, during which our coasts had been threatened, and strong fears were entertained of landings and invasions, and the feelings which had been excited during the war had not had full time to subside. The resolution of Mr. Pitt was,

"That It appears to this House, that to provide effectually for securing his Majesty's dockyards at Portsmouth and Plymouth by a permanent system of fortification, founded on the most economical principles, and requiring the smallest number of troops possible to answer the purpose of such security, is an essential object for the safety of the state intimately connected with the general defence of the kingdom, and necessary for enabling the fleet to act with full vigour and effect for the protection of commerce, the support of our distant possessions, and the prosecution of offensive operations in any war in which the nation may hereafter be engaged."

On the division Mr. Pitt was beaten, and immediately after the vote, he stated that he took it as the decision of the House on the subject, but he did not tender his resignation. Did any of the eminent men then opposed to him call upon him to resign, or propose a resolution similar to the present, because he had not sufficiently the confidence of the House of Commons to enable him to carry through the House a measure which he termed in his motion, an essential object for the safety of the state? Did either Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox, or Mr. Windham complain of the conduct of the Government? No; for if they had, what would have been Mr. Pitt's answer? He would have said, it was true that he had brought forward a very important measure, which he could not induce the House to sanction; but he did not conceive himself called upon to retire from office on that ground. He would have said, it was for him to consider whether those who were likely to come after, or succeed him, were more likely to have the confidence of the House in the administration of the exist-

ing law than himself. He would have asked himself, were they more able than himself to carry useful measures? The result would have been, that he would have replied that, on general principles, as the administrator of the law as it stood, he had the confidence of the House of Commons. He asked if, because the House threw out new measures, not essential for the existing law, a minister of the Crown introducing them was bound to resign? He believed that the right hon. Baronet was a Member of the Government when the property-tax was rejected. On that occasion, did either Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Whitbread, or any other leader of the opposition call upon the Government to resign? Looking to the amount of the tax, that was a matter of more importance than the recent proposal of the Government, but no one made any suggestion of the kind. If any one had, the answer of Lord Castlereagh would have been, that he believed that the House had more general confidence in the then Government, than they were likely to have in the opposition if called upon to take office, and therefore that the Government were determined not to resign. He considered that this would have been a good and sound reason for refusing to resign. All these cases, however, were anterior to the Reform Bill. Now those who recollected the discussions in that House on that great measure, must remember that it was stated repeatedly by almost all who took part in the debate, that for the future a Government could not depend on a large body of thorough-going supporters, but that a very strong Government would have to contend with obstacles they had not formerly to encounter. It should be recollected also that in case of the defeat of a Government under the old system, the majority was not made up by parties who had left them, who were Members for small boroughs, but the representatives of counties or large constituencies. If you were to examine Mr. Pitt's defeats, you would find that they were not occasioned by the small boroughs but by the flinching to decide of the more open and liberal boroughs. If, before the Reform Bill, the most powerful Ministry was exposed to have measures which it deemed of importance defeated, that was still more probable after that bill. If the right hon. Baronet founded his case as to constitutional law upon the nicely-balanced



state of the House of Commons which had been produced by the Reform Bill, the right hon. Baronet would find, that, were he to come into office, but very few months would elapse ere, by the operation of the same principle, he himself would be very unpleasantly reminded of this same constitutional law. For himself, he did not hold that any Government was bound to resign, because it could not carry legislative changes, except in particular cases, where they were impressed with the conviction that, without such and such a law, they could not carry on the public service; and then this was a case which did not depend upon, whether the hindrance arose from King, Lords, or Commons. He was quite sure that on both sides of the House, Gentlemen would feel that there were many ways in which it might be ascertained whether the House did or did not repose confidence in a Ministry, without putting on the records of the House so ill-advised and unsound a resolution as this, declaring that such and such were the principles of the constitution. He had hitherto confined himself mainly to the constitutional question raised, but he had no sort of desire to flinch from any part of the question. He was clearly of opinion that up to this time, the Ministry had been quite justified in pursuing the course which they had adopted; and he considered, that as a Ministry, they had the confidence of the majority of that House. There were many vexatious circumstances through which they had had to make way; there were many dictates of duty which they had had to obey, which, had they been otherwise than dictates of duty, might probably have been deemed humiliating; but, under all the circumstances, he thought he was justified in saying, that up to this time the Ministry had administered the affairs of the country with satisfaction to the people in general, and with honour to themselves. Only a year ago, the House expressly declared that it was not dissatisfied with the Ministry; and since that period, many things had occurred which had been carried on without eliciting any declaration of dissatisfaction on the part of the House. He would ask whether the foreign policy which had been pursued by the present ministry, called for the dissatisfaction of the House, or of the country. He would ask whether England—had the present Ministry had to support its operations, a majority equal to that of

the administration under Lord Grey?—he would ask, whether England could hold higher language, or assume a nobler part than she had done under the conduct of the present Ministry? Were the present Ministry to leave the helm of office to-morrow, they would leave England as proud and justly prominent as ever in her political position among nations, and the honour of her arms untarnished. Again, in reference to domestic Government, within a very short period back, the most alarming symptoms had displayed themselves, most threatening to domestic tranquillity. Yet the noble Lord at the head of the Home Department, without the slightest interference with private rights, without any gagging bills, without any suspension of the *habeas corpus*, without injuring any of the valuable securities of the people, with no other means than those of the most strictly constitutional character, had managed to allay the disturbances which arose, and restored the country to its accustomed tranquillity. As to the Government of Ireland by the present Ministry, he was able to appeal to the distinct vote of confidence accorded by the House two years ago, in favour of the policy of their system—a policy which had been strictly adhered to up to the present period. And as to the state of the case now, a crisis had confessedly arrived in which we were under the necessity of providing for a considerable deficiency—a deficiency occasioned not by any act which called for a withdrawal of confidence on the part of the House, but partly by circumstances which rendered outlay necessary for the maintenance of the dignity and security of this country, and partly by the remission of taxation, called for by a large body of the people, and by men on all sides—a remission receiving the support, among others, of many Gentlemen whom he expected to find voting against Ministers on the present occasion. In connection with the political difficulties which had arisen came a great commercial crisis, and both of these difficult questions it became the duty of the present Ministry to consider. It became a question whether they were to supply deficiencies in a way which should relieve the people, or in a way which should add to their burdens. They chose the former plan. For himself, he had never expected that the whole of the new financial plan would be carried, but he certainly had expected that the

sugar and timber monopolies would be thrown aside, and that the corn monopoly would be placed in a more favourable position than before. The plan, however, had failed; but in his opinion, upon the great principles announced in the proposed resolution of his noble Friend, upon that great principle the Ministry, in his opinion, ought to stand or fall. And in this opinion, considering how grave was the importance of the question, considering how strong the feeling was throughout the country—considering the support which they might fairly expect to derive from those interested in the question—considering how completely the ground of those who opposed Ministers in the late debate had sunk under them—considering the general contempt and disregard in which were held the proceedings of those who opposed Ministers on the mock grounds of humanity. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool seemed dissatisfied at the remark, but the anti-slavery societies throughout England had, with well-nigh one voice, sanctioned the remarks, and repudiated the shifts of men who, because Englishmen would not longer let them grind the negroes, now sought to make the negroes grind the English. Impressed with all these considerations, he felt, that Ministers, having a due regard to the interests of the people, and desirous to work out the great work now in progress were found not to shrink from taking any constitutional means of testing what was the public opinion. It had been said, reproachfully,—"What! dissolve on a popular question, when there is such agitation, such excitement!" but on what suit or popular question should there be a dissolution? On what question appeal to the people, but a question in which they felt interested? As to the agitation which was suggested, there was no agitation but of the most legitimate description; there was no excitement—no agitation—but what was created of and by the people. Surely the right hon. Baronet did not mean to suggest that the people were not to feel excited, were not to get up an agitation, among themselves upon questions which they could not but perceive came home to their pockets, to their best interests and comforts? Surely the right hon. Baronet did not mean to preclude them from taking an honest interest in the returning to Parliament of Gentlemen who should fairly represent their sentiments, and if the right

hon. Baronet did not mean this, there could be no meaning in his outcry about agitation. But enough of this; the Ministers had done what they could on their part, the rest must be done by the people. Let but the people unite again with the spirit which actuated them in 1831, to resist corruption and aristocratic influence, and they would have an easy task. If the result was different—if the people neglected their own interests—if they deserted their post—at least they would have no reason to reproach the present Ministers who would then, without the smallest repining, submit to the voice of the country, and would pursue the only course left open to them, of maintaining through good report and through evil report, as private Members of the House, the same principles which they had advocated as Ministers.

Debate adjourned.

[BRIBERY AT ELECTIONS.] On the motion of Lord John Russell, leave was given to bring in a bill for the prevention of Bribery at elections.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* begged to know whether any Member of the Committee on the St. Alban's election petition intended to propose measures for the prosecution and punishment of the gross bribery which had been sworn to have taken place at that election. It appeared to him that the House would be disgraced if such proceedings were not punished.

Mr. *Mildmay* said, it was the feeling of the Committee that no Gentleman did intend to propose measures on the subject, and the reason was, that they had heard only the evidence on one side, and no opportunity was given to the other side to contradict it, in consequence of the counsel giving up the case.

Mr. *W. Wynn* thought the charge had been sufficiently established to form the ground of a prosecution. He begged to give notice that he should bring the matter forward on the first open day on which he could do so without interfering with the adjourned debate.

Mr. *Mildmay* begged to repeat that the evidence was not satisfactory. It was *ex parte*, and there was no opportunity given to the party accused of contradicting it. One of the witnesses gave his evidence in a manner which would render him (Mr. Mildmay) very cautious in giving credence to it. However, he should be ready to

support the right hon. Gentleman in any measures for bringing parties really guilty to justice.

Mr. C. Buller rose, but was prevented from speaking by loud cries of "Question" and "Chair."

The *Speaker* said, that the right hon. Gentleman near him had put a question, which had been answered, and that there was now no question before the chair.

Lord J. Russell moved, that the orders of the day be read,

Mr. C. Buller said, if hon. Members would have heard him, he was going to ask a question. It was highly inconvenient that Gentlemen should make party speeches on one side of the House, and that there should be no opportunity of answering them. He begged to suggest that if the right hon. Gentleman should take up the case of St. Alban's, he should carry out his principle by adopting proceedings against the people of Walsall.

Mr. W. Wynn had read the evidence of the Walsall Committee, but he did not think it contained anything to justify such proceedings. But wherever bribery could be proved, he thought the House of Commons, as the grand inquest of the nation, ought not to let it go unpunished.

**REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND).]** Lord Stanley said, as it was clear, from the intimations of the Government, that there would be no chance of bringing forward his bill relative to Irish registration during the present Session, he should move that the Order be discharged.

The order for the second reading of the Bill read and discharged. Bill withdrawn. Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, May 28, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a second time :—Turnpike Roads and Highways.—Read a third time :—County Bridges; Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Petitions presented. By Lord Redesdale, Lord Sondes, Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, and the Earl of Glengall, from Gloucester, Kent, Norfolk, Lincoln, Essex, and Tipperary, against any Alteration in the Corn-laws.—By the Bishop of Ripon, from places in his Diocese, for Church Extension.—By the Earl of Haddington, from the Town-council of Forfar, against any interference with the Scotch system of Banking.—By the Bishop of Gloucester, from Turley (Gloucestershire), against Sunday Travelling on Rivers and Canals.—By Lord Ashburton, from Shipowners, Merchants, and Builders of Whitehaven, against the Government proposition for the Alteration of the Timber Duties.—By the Marquess of Downshire, for the Abolition of Patronage in the Church of Scotland.—By Lord Denman, from a Baptist Congre-

gation in Leamington Priory, Warwickshire, from Boston, in the county of Lincoln, Burslem, in Staffordshire, Sutton Borough, in Cornwall, Mount Zion Chapel, Northampton, Devonshire-square Chapel, London, and other places, against taking Oaths in Courts of Justice.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, May 28, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a second time :—Sugar Duties.—Read a third time :—Court House (Ireland); Turnpike Roads; Sewers; Madhouses (Scotland).

Petitions presented. By Mr. Villiers, from Agricultural Parishes in Buckingham, from Wendover, Huntingdon, from Stourbridge, from the Mayor and Corporation of Walsall, from School Teachers in the Potteries, and from Bedworth, Warrington, and Nottingham, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord James Stuart, from Ayr, and Newton-upon-Ayr, from the Magistrates and Council of Maybole, from the Inhabitants of the Parish of Maybole, from the Bankers, Merchants, and Inhabitants of Beith, from the Town and Parish of Largs, and from Kilwinning, Catrine, New Cumnock, and Dalrymple, all in the county of Ayr, for Revision of the Import Duties.

**BRIBERY AT ST. ALBAN'S.]** Mr. Williams Wynn gave notice, that on Wednesday next, should the debate on the motion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth be then terminated, or on the first opportunity after its termination, he should bring forward a motion which, as a question of privilege, should have precedence of all other business—that the House do resolve on the prosecution by the Attorney-general of Dr. Webster for gross bribery and corruption at the recent election for the borough of St. Alban's.

Mr. Sanford would take that opportunity of explaining that, as Chairman of the Committee for trying the merits of the petition of St. Alban's, he should have made some motion on the subject, if such had been the wish of the Committee; but, having received no intimation to that effect from the Committee, he did not think it his duty to do so.

**ADJOURNMENT — WHITSUN HOLIDAYS.]** Lord J. Russell begged leave to move that this House, at its rising, do adjourn to Wednesday next.

Sir R. Peel presumed that the noble Lord had made this motion with the understanding that the adjourned debate, if not terminated this night, should have precedence of all other business on Wednesday next, the day to which the noble Lord proposed to adjourn the House, as otherwise he thought that they could not avoid going on with the adjourned debate

on Monday and Tuesday next. He knew it had been said, that he brought on his motion for the purpose of avoiding a discussion on the Corn-laws. This he most distinctly denied. He disclaimed any such motive whatever. He would not make any objection to the proposition of the noble Lord with reference to the adjournment of this House to Wednesday, if it be distinctly understood that, in case of the debate not being ended this night, it would have precedence of all other business on Wednesday.

Lord J. Russell thought that the House would have no difficulty in coming to the understanding which the right hon. Baronet had recommended, in permitting the debate upon his motion, if adjourned over from to-night, to take precedence of all other business on Wednesday evening next. He would not certainly make any objection to the proposition.

House to adjourn, on its rising, to Wednesday.

**INSURRECTION IN CRETE.]** Lord Teignmouth said, he wished to receive information from her Majesty's Government upon a subject which should claim a little of their attention at this moment, and he wished to ask a question of the noble Lord opposite, with reference to it. He alluded to the insurrection which had lately taken place in the Island of Crete. The questions he wished to put to the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, were these. Whether he had received any further information with reference to this insurrection? And whether her Majesty's Ministers had taken proper precaution of instructing their consul there, to take the necessary steps to prevent the commission of those cruelties which may be perpetrated upon persons under the present circumstances of the island.

Lord J. Russell said, he would rather not answer the questions which had just been put to him by the noble Lord, as his noble Friend, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs would be much better able to give him the desired information.

Lord Teignmouth said, that yesterday he had given notice to the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, that it was his intention to ask such questions this evening. And he expected to have seen that noble Lord in his place. As, however, the noble Lord was not then in the House, he (Lord Teignmouth) thought that the noble Lord,

the Secretary for the Colonies, could give him all the information he asked.

**BOROUGH IMPROVEMENTS.—BUILDINGS.]** Viscount Sandon wished to know whether it was the intention of the noble Lord opposite to bring on the two bills this Session, which he had already brought under the notice of the House—he alluded to the Boroughs Improvement Bill, and the Buildings Regulation Bill.

Lord J. Russell said, that considering there were several points in those bills which would require the attention of that House, and deeming it probable that amendments would be moved which would create a lengthened discussion, it was not his intention to press those bills this Session upon the House.

**CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTRY.—ADJOURNED DEBATE.]** Upon the Order of the Day being read, for resuming the Adjourned Debate,

Mr. R. M. Milnes said, that belonging to that small minority of those Members of the House who were in the habit of addressing it, who did not take part in the late debate, he thought he had now some small claim on the attention of the House, and he assured the House that if it were granted to him he would not abuse it. He wished it had been his good fortune to have caught the Speaker's eye last night, because he should then have at once and unpremeditatedly uttered his opinions, which the House, under such circumstances, would have received with its usual indulgence. But, rising this evening, to speak first upon the adjourned debate of a former day, he feared the House might expect more from him than he could give. It would be expected of him or of any other hon. Member who would address the House this evening that he should address his attention to the speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Macanlay). However they might differ in opinion as to the reasoning of that speech, they must all allow that it was one of the most interesting speeches ever delivered on the floor of that House. He felt that in coming into competition with such an authority, he should need all the kindness of the House, and must place himself entirely at its mercy. If he (Mr. Milnes) understood his right hon. Friend rightly, he thought his right hon. Friend admitted that the

Government of which he was a Member was not able to carry certain measures, which, nevertheless, they believed were most important for the interests of the country; but that, notwithstanding this, he was not prepared to come to the conclusion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, that her Majesty's Ministers were unworthy of the confidence of the House. If his right hon. Friend had made good his proposition, he must say at once that he considered that the debate was at an end. But in answer to the subtle disquisitions and historical dissertations of his right hon. Friend, he would ask two simple questions which seemed conclusive against his argument, and these questions were, whether if this were true, if a Government were capable of administering the affairs of the country without demanding the legislative confidence of the Parliament, they would not arrive at these two conclusions, first, that it was next to impossible to turn out any Government at all, and that it was next to impossible to proceed with the Government of this country. If he was not wrong, the chief precedents which refer to the present case, were those of Mr. Pitt during the warfare which preceded the dissolution of the Parliament that opposed his administration, and that of his right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, during the six weeks in which he was frequently defeated in that House. But there was this difference between those cases and the present one. Those questions were solely questions of party, and were carried by party spirit, questions in fact, not whether such and such measures should be carried, but whether the Government should be administered by certain men. In former times the chief questions which came before Parliament were questions relating to Administration, but now-a-days the case was entirely different. The administration of affairs was so much improved in all its branches, and so much better organised, that it would be difficult to find any question of that nature on which the Government could be turned out. It would be absurd now to think of subverting a Government for appointing a public officer who was unpopular, or nominating a bishop who was not orthodox. The hon. Member for Edinburgh had said, that the first business of a Minister was to administer existing laws; this might be the first business, but it was far from being all. For indeed how was it possible to draw a distinct line be-

tween administrative measures on one side and legislative measures on the other. The two are ever interwoven. The only way fitly to administer a bad law, is to make it better; and if a Government is too weak to be able to improve or perfect the law which is imperfect or inefficient, no possible administration of that law can be beneficial to the country. Look at the number of laws and amendments of laws, now proposed every Session, and tell me if the Government can throw off the responsibility of just legislation. It had given him some gratification to perceive during the debate, that they were not to feel themselves precluded, as some hon. Members had asserted they were, from handling this question of Ministerial confidence, lest they should be accused of dealing improperly with the prerogative of the Crown. Here at least the question of prerogative does not occur, although indeed it had been very improperly introduced by his right hon. Friend, the Member for Nottingham (Sir J. C. Hobhouse). If indeed, that should take place, which he anticipated, he was confident her Majesty would perform aright, the solemn duties imposed upon her, and would find full compensation for any personal sacrifice in the affectionate gratitude of an admiring and sympathising people. It was then open to the House to consider fairly the proposition of the right hon. Baronet. He had founded that proposition or resolution upon the ground that the present Ministers could not pass those measures which they conceived to be essential to the public service. It might be said, that their power was, in the present state of parties in that House, limited to the extent of their being able to render abortive the measures attempted through Parliament by the conservative interest in that House. This was an unfair and an improper position as respected parties and the public, and it ought to be set right. There were, he was sorry to say, palpable causes, for this condition of parties in the State, and he saw some of them originating in the passing of the Reform bill. That bill was unfortunately a party, not a national measure, supported by a party which accomplished its object by a mere majority, and from that circumstance there were many Members in the House who could not be induced to act with or support the views of those who had thus forced that particular measure of reform upon the country. This seemed to him to account for our being now

come to a dead lock. Nothing could be harmoniously accomplished, whether the subject was suggested by them, or the other side of the House. They would recollect the effort made by the noble Lord (Stanley) to correct the abuses admitted to exist in the system of registration of voters in Ireland, and the fierce opposition he had met with in that praiseworthy attempt from her Majesty's Ministers. To consummate the mischief, the bill tardily proposed by the Government to effect the same object had failed, so that whilst the evil and the abuse of the franchise, through imperfect and fraudulent registration, was admitted to exist by the Government and the opposition, both their efforts failed to apply a remedy. Thus the Government, finding itself left unsupported by efficient majorities began to lose the confidence of even those who had raised them to power. Their obstinacy in refusing to resign their places to others, who might be able to carry these measures, held out fearful inducements to their opponents to refuse the supplies; but that temptation they had, much to their credit, refused—and had resolved to decide the question of the fitness of their opponents for office upon fair grounds of argument and appeal to the people. The Government, in this debate, had taken to itself the credit of our success in Syria and in Egypt; but he would tell his right hon. Friend (Mr. Macaulay) that he would not permit him to arrogate to the Ministry the merit and valour of our soldiers and sailors, who had so gallantly distinguished themselves at Newport, and in the late glorious campaign in the East. The cry of the Ministers at last was, that a terrible crisis had arrived. Now, he would remind them, that they had brought about that crisis themselves, by throwing down the most awful gage before the public that ever was heard of—namely, the question of free and unrestricted trade with the foreigner, to the prejudice of our own colonies and the industry of British subjects. This question of free-trade, merely as it respected the article of sugar, must decide if carried the fate of the great experiment carrying on at an enormous expense to this nation in our West-Indian possessions. It must decide not only the fate of the negroes in our West-Indian islands, but the fate of the negroes in a state of slavery in the United States, and the fate of the negro population, wherever it may be found in a similar situation in any part of the globe. His right hon. Friend opposite

had admitted that on the defeat of the Government on the sugar bill, they ought to resign or dissolve. If the case were otherwise, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had only to compose his budget of a great variety of elements, and have a discussion upon each, which might be carried on for six months, and thus the business of the country be brought to a complete stand still. The noble Lord opposite had chosen a most unhappy time to agitate the subject of the Corn-laws, when the season promised under Providence to be productive of a most abundant harvest. Now, if the noble Lord had come down to the House immediately after his majority of twenty-one on the question of confidence last year, and proposed such a measure, the country would have given him credit for courage at least, but it was now clear that the question was suggested to his mind by the circumstances in which he was placed. He did not doubt, from the opinions of men who well understood the subject, with whom he had consulted, that abundant means might be found in the resources of the country to make up even the frightful deficiencies of the Chancellor of the Exchequer without having recourse to such perilous experiments as those proposed by her Majesty's Government. If ever there was a question that required the most sober and deliberate consideration it was that of the Corn-laws. He must recall a phrase in which he had said that the courage of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, could be impugned. On the contrary, that noble Lord was fatally courageous on political matters. It had been well said by a writer whose rare wit was always subordinated to strong common sense that that noble Lord would undertake to rebuild St. Paul's, command the channel fleet, and perform the most frightful surgical operation. The noble Lord had undertaken to rebuild the constitution by the Reform bill, to command a squadron which he himself declared not to be sea-worthy, after its defeat on the Jamaica bill, and now he has taken in hand the coarse instrument of popular excitement to accomplish a work which required the finest tact, the most consummate skill, and the wisest experience. Popular opinion ought not to be played with, and as well might it be expected to make the people understand the Newtonian theory of light as the bearing and effects of the repeal of the Corn-laws. Thanks to the providential good sense of the English people, the most violent ex-

citements had rolled from their minds as a ball from a marble surface, and would have fallen innocuous, which in any other land would have aroused a spirit of bloodshed and revenge. The distresses of that people as had been described in that House by some hon. Members must go to the heart of every Englishman—and he solemnly declared as a landowner that if he thought the total repeal even of the Corn-laws would have the effect of relieving those distresses, no consideration of self-interest should induce him to oppose such a measure. But he was not disposed to confound these distresses with the distresses of a Whig Chancellor of the Exchequer—he was not disposed to taint the solemn investigation of the evils under which our society was now labouring with the mean political casualties of the moment—with the question whether the Ministerial benches should be occupied by one set of Gentlemen or another. Reference had been made to the Reform bill and to Catholic Emancipation, but those were separate and distinct questions, and not complicated propositions as the present. His right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth had been taunted by the right hon. Member for the city of Edinburgh with want of candour, but he thought he might with more justice retort upon the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues the charge of going with false pretences to the country for they had raised the cry of the Corn-laws with no intention of carrying out any effective alteration in them, because they dared not propose a fixed duty of 8s., under those circumstances in which the duty was now not more than 1s. The proposition therefore, was nothing but a false pretence—a mere delusion. He did not mean to say that these questions would not, one day or other, in some form or other be carried; but he trusted it would be by some more safe and solid means than accidental agitation. If they were thus carried, any ultimate good they might produce would be diminished, and the immediate evil enormously increased. Under the operation of the Reform Act, he did not anticipate that any permanently strong Government could be formed by either side of the House; still he thought, if his right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth occupied the bench opposite, his administration would be much stronger than that of the present Government; and of this he was quite certain, that his right hon. Friend, if he found he could not carry those measures

which he deemed to be essential to the best interests of the nation, would not stay there longer than he could properly and fitly discharge the duties of a Government. For himself, he (Mr. Milnes) had no ambition to see his right hon. Friend in any other position than that which he now occupied—a position in which he enjoyed the pleasures of power without its responsibilities—the untitled and unsalaried Minister of England. The question now really was, whether the Government was able to act up to the wants of the times, or were to continue in their present course, which had brought upon them the contempt and ridicule not only of the people of this country, but of all the world. He would not say what a Conservative Government might do; but he would venture to say what they would never do—they would not attempt to prolong the existence of a party by means totally at variance with its historical and traditionary principles,—they would not lay on the Throne, the burthen of its own deficiencies and short comings, they would not lay the train of domestic agitation, and just before the lightning explodes it, boast that they had saved the nation from destruction by their own supernatural prudence, and superhuman skill—they would not in their foreign policy run the risk of a war with our great and natural constitutional ally, with that France, with whom it was the interest of all civilization that we should be heartily and firmly connected, for some imaginative fear of another power, which as yet, would hardly be said to exist, and thus fix our attention when the momentary peril was over, much less on any advantage we had attained, than on the risks we had run,—and lastly, they would not offer to all Europe the painful spectacle of a representative Government, retaining that power, which they ought to hold with an almost womanly sense of honour and delicacy, in defiance of the repeated opinion of the House of Commons, the constant opposition of the House of Lords, and the palpable distaste and distrust of the country. What he wanted to see was, an administration that would look only to the real interests of the country, and to such a Government he should always give his support.

Mr. A. Sanford was glad that the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) had screwed his courage to the "sticking place," and at last brought the two great parties in that House to a fair stand-up fight. He (Mr. Sanford) did not hesitate to say, that

he could not place confidence in the right hon. Baronet. His impression was, that the question for the consideration of the country was, not whether the present Ministry should continue in office, or whether the power of Government should be transferred to the right hon. Baronet; but whether, judging from the previous conduct of the right hon. Baronet, it would be possible for the people to repose their trust and confidence in him. Upon what ground did the right hon. Baronet ask for the confidence of the House and the country? Was it on the ground of his former conduct whilst in power? Was it for his manner of treating great constitutional questions? Was it for his early resistance and late concession of the Roman Catholic claims? Was it for his opposition to the Reform Bill? Upon which of these grounds was it that he presented himself to the country and said "Give me your confidence?" The right hon. Baronet said the other evening that his principles were well known, and that he would make no fresh declaration of them. It might be very true, that the right hon. Baronet's principles were well known; but he (Mr. Sanford), nevertheless thought, that upon an occasion like the present some declaration of opinion was due from him. In his (Mr. Sanford's) view it was imperative upon a man who asked for so high an honour as that to which the right hon. Baronet aspired, to state to the country the grounds upon which he sought to attain it. In 1835 the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire (Lord Stanley) expressed an opinion, that it would be impossible for the country, judging from the previous conduct of the right hon. Baronet, to place confidence in him. How was it, then, that the noble Lord was now found among the right hon. Baronet's most ardent supporters? What work of public service could the right hon. Baronet urge that should outweigh the services performed by the present Ministry? He (Mr. Sanford) would venture to say, that during the last ten years more had been accomplished for the benefit of the country, than had ever been achieved in a similar period, under any other Administration; and he was satisfied that hereafter, when the spirit of party had subsided, and when the events of the present day were looked back to with calmness and impartiality, due justice would be done to those who of late years had conducted the affairs of the

country with so much advantage to the empire, and so much honour and credit to themselves. For these reasons he should feel it his duty to vote against the motion of the right hon. Baronet; feeling that if he were to give a contrary vote, it would not be a vote of want of confidence in the present Ministry, but a vote of confidence in the right hon. Baronet.

Mr. *Darby* said, he had heard nothing in the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sanford) who had just sat down, which should prevent him giving his vote in favour of the motion of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. The hon. Gentleman stated he could have no confidence in a Government formed by the right hon. Baronet, but had carefully abstained from expressing the slightest confidence in her Majesty's Ministers. The right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, stated in his speech, that he would prove mathematically, by the *reductio ad absurdum*, that the motion of the Member for Tamworth could not be entertained. Now, the foundation of the principle on which such a mode of proof rested was, that that which we assumed should be demonstrated to be absolutely inconsistent with that which we proved to be true. But the right hon. Gentleman had done no such thing. The right hon. Gentleman's argument was this: that any Government now might be weak, and therefore to hold office under such circumstances could not be contrary to the spirit of the constitution. But he denied even that assumption, that the probability was, that a Government formed by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth would be weak; nor could he agree in opinion with his hon. Friend, the Member for Pontefract. His grounds for believing, that a strong Government might be formed were, that the Reform Government in 1833 had a majority of 300; in 1834, 150; in 1835, 50; in 1836, 50; in 1837, 30; in 1838, 30; in 1839, that majority had dwindled down to ten; and in 1840, in eleven divisions, which right hon. Gentlemen opposite stigmatised as party divisions, her Majesty's Government were eight times left in a minority; in the present year they had been beaten three times out of four, and on the last occasion by a majority of thirty-six. There had been three different Parliaments sitting during this period; and it would be a curious calculation, whether her Majesty's Government had lost the confidence of the



House or of the country most rapidly. But he (Mr. Darby) thought that the opinions thus expressed in the House might be taken as a fair index of the feelings of the constituency: and he (Mr. Darby) thought it was reasonable to conclude, that the right hon. Baronet had every prospect, should he be called to power, of forming a strong and efficient Government. The right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, had been brought into that House, on account of his talents, to assist in carrying the Reform Bill; and now, a Cabinet Minister of the Reform Government, was he to tell the House, that the effect of the Reform Bill had been such, that the House could not with safety to the country exercise one of its most important privileges, namely, express its opinion on the efficiency of the Government to carry on the Administration of affairs? The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Control, had praised the noble Lord, the Member for North Lincolnshire, for his stright-forward and manly conduct; but he thought the right hon. Gentleman had acted somewhat cruelly towards the noble Lord. The noble Lord had stated, that the vote of confidence was not connected with the Corn-laws, "But," said the right hon. Gentleman, "the Government will dissolve, and ask the country whether it has confidence in the Ministers." It was monopoly or no monopoly. As to monopoly, he believed, that it was the Chamber of Commerce of Manchester, backed by the Government, who were attempting, for selfish purposes, to trample upon the great commercial and agricultural interests of this country; and he was inclined to credit this the more, as the noble Lord had stated, that the Government first contemplated the budget in March. In March it was, that the Chamber of Commerce met on the import duties, and in March published their pamphlet on that subject. But the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, and his Friends would have to go to their constituents and say "I have voted with the Government without reference to the Corn-laws; but the Government would only accept my vote as connected with their budget; and if their agitation succeeds, you will lose your Corn-laws. But at least you will have this consolation,—I have secured for you a Whig-Radical Administration." There were certain persons in 1784 called Fox's martyrs; and perhaps the noble Lord, the

Secretary for the Colonies, thought there would be Peel martyrs in 1841. But he advised the noble Secretary to enquire of the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, and his Friends, whether they did not think there would be a greater number of Russell martyrs. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, alluded on a former occasion to the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth's, having been a party to those expences which had created the financial difficulties. It was not for him (Mr. Darby) to say what were the opinions of the right hon. Baronet; but he had a right to state the grounds on which he had, with respect to them, given his unhesitating support to the right hon. Baronet. The principle on which he understood that the Member for Tamworth had assented to the increase of the forces, was, not that he expressed any approval of the policy of the Government, but that though armies and fleets might be wanting to repair the mischief, a stout frigate would have prevented it. The right hon. Baronet would not punish the neglect of the Government by the sacrifice of the country, but would assist those who had been to blame, to maintain the honour of the nation and the integrity of the empire. But the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, had fallen into great error in mistaking the energies of the people and the support of the Opposition for the energy of the Administration. He believed much of the embarrassment was owing to the Government. In Canada, no doubt, there were great difficulties, but did not those at the head of the Government there, declare that the loyal distrusted Her Majesty's Government, and the disloyal believed they had the Government on their side? The truth was, it was impossible to govern the country on Radical principles at home, and on Conservative principles in the colonies. Again, he had heard the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, say in his place in Parliament, with reference to Eastern affairs, that long ago the Porte had applied to this country. The noble Lord left them to obtain that assistance from Russia. He would not go further into detail, but he was justified in asserting that Government had involved the country in its present difficulties. The noble Lord opposite stated that the insurrection of the Chartist had led to considerable expenditure, and the Secretary-at-War that there had been

similar outbreaks since the time of the French Revolution. He begged to ask who evoked that spirit at the time of the French Revolution? The same party who were now the authors and founders of Chartism. He did not mean to charge the noble Lord opposite with designing these things, but it was consequent on the policy of the Government. The noble Lord charged the Conservative party with a dishonourable coalition with the Chartists. This he denied. In a late contest the Chartists offered their support to the Conservative candidate, who had been most active in putting them down, on the ground that the noble Lord and the Government had first misled them and then punished them. [*Laughter.*] The noble Lord laughed. Did he not appoint Frost a magistrate? They sowed the seeds of resistance to all Government, and expected to reap party power. They forgot the immutable law of nature, that seed should bear seed after its own kind; but the poisonous fruit had been gathered from the noxious seed, and they had been placed in the most painful and degrading situation in which a Government could be placed. They had been, of necessity, compelled to punish those whom they had misled. He had denounced, and always would denounce agitation as inconsistent with the principles by which he had all his life been actuated. But if such language were used at the hustings as had lately been held at Covent Garden, and the noble Lord's speech on the Budget was but the same, reduced to a Parliamentary scale, should the supporters of the Government go prepared with such weapons? He feared there was great risk that in the excitement of an election others would be induced to take up similar weapons to defend themselves. He hoped not, for he contemplated this with fearful apprehension, and should the people be roused, and tumult follow, they (the Government) would be responsible to their Queen and their country. And should they fail, humiliated as the right hon. Secretary at War admitted they had been, they would then be worse than humiliated, and at last have to resign their offices in the face of a people who had shewn themselves wiser and better than those who had misgoverned them. They had abandoned one measure—they had promoted agitation in another, which he believed would fail of its intended

purpose; yet no man could predict the mischief which might ensue. No one could doubt the fact that the Government were incapable of carrying on any longer the business of the country. And was this, then, the effect of the Reform Bill that it was necessary for the House of Commons, without a struggle, to resign its most important privilege,—the privilege of expressing its opinion on the inefficiency of the Government, and the propriety of resignation? He felt confident that the House would not without an effort abandon so important a function; and it was only on this pretence that it seemed possible to offer any resistance to the motion then before the House.

Mr. Hutton said, that he believed that the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies was anxious really and truly to bring forward measures for the benefit and for the consideration of the country. Those measures were intended to relieve the distress which existed in all parts of the country, and which was admitted by both sides of the House, as requiring a radical alteration. He rose for the purpose of expressing his gratitude to the Government for the measures which they had taken for the relief of the people of Ireland. The policy of the Government was acknowledged by that people, and had produced a state of tranquillity in Ireland greater than had ever before existed. He felt surprised that the state of Ireland had never been once referred to by the right hon. Baronet opposite in his attack on Ministers. The right hon. Baronet had avoided Ireland altogether, but he (Mr. Hutton) thought, although Ireland had not been mentioned in the course of the debate, that it had some right to be considered. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to Ireland as having been the cause of a great part of the deficiency of the revenue. That deficiency had been caused by a great moral effort on the part of the people of Ireland, and he thought they were entitled to the benefits arising from the reductions of the duties proposed by Government. It was but fair that they should have an opportunity of making up the deficiency which had been caused by their abstaining from spirituous liquors. The measures of Government, he thought, would not only benefit the revenue, but would also be of great advantage to Ireland. The hon. Member for Pomfret had referred to a great many topics, and among

others to the time these measures had been brought forward. Now, he thought that the proper time for bringing forward these measures was when the distress of the country was greatest. The right hon. Baronet had also refrained from referring to the bill of the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire, which was intended to distress and harass the people of Ireland, under the name of defining their franchise. The party opposite had succeeded in throwing out the bill of the Government, which would have remedied the defects which the bill of the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire would not have remedied. Yet the right hon. Baronet had avoided all mention of these measures. Looking, then, to the course which the right hon. Baronet had pursued, he could not believe that his Government could ever give satisfaction to the people of Ireland, and approving, as he (Mr. Hutton) did, of the policy of the present Government towards that country, he felt bound to oppose the motion of the right hon. Baronet opposite.

Lord Norreys : I am not surprised, Sir, that her Majesty's Ministers should receive support on this occasion from the Members of the movement party in this House. But I must confess, I am surprised how any man, the representative of agricultural constituents, who heard the speech of the noble Lord (the Member for Stroud) the other night, how any man who was an adherent of Lord Grey's Administration, who was an admirer of the principles on which that administration was constructed, can give his support on the present occasion to those who have abandoned every ground, who have violated every principle on which that Administration was conducted. Lord Grey, when he retired from office stated, that the principle alone on which he had consented to administer the affairs of the country, were peace, retrenchment, reform, and non-intervention. How have Ministers maintained peace? Have not the country been involved in expensive wars? How have they acted on the principles of non-intervention? There has been nothing but interference with foreign nations. Where are their retrenchments? Having taken office with a large surplus revenue left by the Duke of Wellington's Administration, they have exhibited a miserable deficiency in the public revenue, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down last year and called on the House

for an increase of taxation, and notwithstanding this, he again exhibited this year a still more lamentable deficiency, to remedy which, he and her Majesty's Government put forward measures which he knows and they know will be impossible to carry, this or the next Parliament. Lord Grey, when he retired from office stated he had placed the great question of Parliamentary reform on a safe and satisfactory basis—that basis Ministers have recently attempted to disturb—and their supporters openly avow it. As long as the Reform Bill enables them to make inroads on the institutions of the country, as long as it enables them to proceed with the march of democracy, so long are they content to abide by it, so long are they willing to constitute that as public opinion, but the moment they find a Conservative tendency in the country, a determination to resist the further progress of democratic principles, then they call out for change, and still further change, till it shall suit their views and interests. Lord Grey congratulated Parliament on the settlement of the West-India question—the question of negro emancipation—that principle Ministers have also attempted to violate. Lord Grey boasted that he had left trade in a sound and healthy state—can her Majesty's Ministers say the same? who, by the feebleness and decrepitude of their Government, and their adherence to office, have involved the trade and commerce of the country in a state of stagnation; who, for their own purposes, prolonged and protracted the debates the other day, notwithstanding they had been reproved in this House by the late Governor of the Bank, for the evil effects which the continuance of the discussion is likely to have on the trade and commerce of the country. Lord Grey's Cabinet were united in resisting any alteration in the Corn-laws. Lord Grey, when he found himself, not in a minority, but supported only by a small majority, sooner than yield to the pressure from without and concede measures which he did not approve of, acting in the spirit of the constitution, retired with honour to himself. Lord Grey stated, that communications had been held (without his knowledge or consent) with a person, he would describe him in no other terms than one who took a strong part in the affairs of Ireland—had he been aware of them there was no power which he possessed, no

influence which he had, which he would not have exerted to prevent them, because he knew from experience that no communications could be made with safety in that quarter—that quarter was now the main prop and support of her Majesty's Government. One of the last acts of Lord Grey's Government, when the question of the Repeal of the Union was before the House, was to move an address to the Crown, sending it up to the other House of Parliament, making it an act of the Imperial Legislature, pledging Parliament to the maintenance of the union with Ireland. And would Lord Grey have consented, as her Majesty's Ministers had done, to take into their Government one who had on that occasion voted for the dismemberment of the British empire. Now, Sir, the Secretary-at-War last night took credit to the Government for their administration of the affairs of Ireland, and asked with an air of triumph whether the House had not given them a vote of confidence two years ago, and confessed that their policy towards that country was laudable; but he omitted to state the real circumstances of the case. Charges of high crimes and misdemeanours have been brought against the executive Government in Ireland, and a committee has been appointed by the House of Lords to inquire into them. In order to intimidate the House of Lords, and stifle this investigation, Ministers came down to this House and called for a vote of confidence for their Government of Ireland—which they voted in the absence of all information—but it was distinctly proved before that committee, that there had been a perversion of justice for political purposes, that crime and outrage had been encouraged, so that the executive had placed itself above the judges and the jury of the land. That notwithstanding the difficulty of obtaining convictions in that country, the verdicts of the jury had been set aside and the sentences of the judges reversed, a violation of the great securities of public liberty—the trial by jury and independence of the judges. The Secretary-at-war also took credit to the Government for the suppression of the riots in this country, and boasted that they had done so without the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and without coming to Parliament for higher powers, but he omitted to inform the House what had in a great degree encouraged those disturbances. Had he forgotten the speech

of the noble Lord the Member for Stroud at Liverpool, and the countenance he had given to the Chartists by placing known Chartists in the Commission of the peace? Now, Sir, I should like to ask Ministers this question,—after they have appealed to the country on the subject of the Corn-laws, and they find themselves defeated on that question, as they will be, and they know they will be, in the next Parliament, will they then resign, or having made that cry their purpose, will they abandon it, as they did the Appropriation Clause?—as they did the Church-rate question?—as they did the Irish Registration Bill? and attempt to scramble on wielding the patronage without the power of office. And what must the impression in the country be? Why that the noble Lord at the head of the Government, who had two years expressed himself strongly in favour of the Corn-laws, and who resigned because he said Ministers had not strength to take those measures of energy and importance which the circumstances of the country required, had lent himself to put this question forward for the unworthy purpose of crippling his successors in office. And that's the noble Lord, the leader of this House—he, who when the representative of a county, had addressed a letter to his constituents couched in strong language in favour of the Corn-laws—had for the purpose of propping up his weak and tottering Administration, condescended to make that speech the other night, a speech in direct violation of his former opinion, a speech so unworthy of a Minister of the Crown, calculated to excite, inflame, and agitate, the minds of the people, attempting to set one interest against another—to place the lauded interest in an unfair and invidious position—a course which, however it may gain for him temporary applause, however it may give satisfaction to those who advocate extreme opinions, and who wish to keep this country in a perpetual state of ferment and excitement, let him depend upon it, will lessen him in the confidence, and lower him in the estimation, of all the friends of peace and good order throughout the country.

Mr. H. Grattan said, that he rose in behalf of two classes, which the right hon. Baronet opposite had omitted to notice—the people of England and the people of Ireland. It was an extraordinary thing that, during a speech of one hour and a

half, the right hon. Baronet had never mentioned the words, the people of Ireland or the people of England. The Government had been called a weak, an ignorant, and a contemptible Government. These were phrases which the people of England would remember, and, perhaps, the Administration of the right hon. Baronet opposite would be characterised by the same epithets. But in regard to the measures of the present Government, for the reduction of the duties on sugar, timber, and corn, he thought they were founded on sound and comprehensive principles. We could not expect foreign nations to take the manufactures of this country, if we did not take their produce in return. They might depend upon it, that the people would see on the other, the Conservative side, the spirit of monopoly; and on that the Ministerial side, the spirit of liberalism. In all the speeches which Gentlemen opposite had made on the subject, he could not discover three statesmanlike sentences. The example of Mr. Pitt had been cited against Ministers, but Mr. Pitt had not resigned in 1784, when he gave up the reform principle; he did not resign on the Catholic question. He resigned afterwards, on a point of honour peculiar to himself, and not in consequence of being defeated in the House of Commons. He would at once allude to the case of his own country. The right hon. Baronet had been guilty of two great omissions. The individual who sought to be the Minister of this country ought to have made a statement of the principles upon which, if he attained office, he would act. When the right hon. Baronet saw the great concessions the present Ministers were disposed to make, to meet the embarrassed state of the industry and revenue of the country, and when he knew what it was they had already done for Ireland, by which they had gained the gratitude and support of that people, who were eight millions, he thought the right hon. Baronet should have told the House what it was he meant to do with that country. There were in the right hon. Baronet's speech two words, which particularly dwelt upon his ear. The right hon. Baronet said, "I reserve my opinions, I promise nothing." [Sir Robert Peel: I said on finance.] He could not be mistaken, for he felt anxious to know what the right hon. Baronet proposed doing with respect to Ireland, and he omitted to notice the

condition of eight millions of Irish subjects. He forgot his former speech, in which he declared, that the great obstacle his Government had to encounter was the Government of Ireland, although on that occasion he resigned under the pretence that he could not control the appointment of the bed-chamber women. But it was Ireland that defeated the right hon. Baronet, and he thought that they would be able to conquer the right hon. Baronet and his friends yet. For that reason he had risen, in order to show that the right hon. Baronet was totally and absolutely unfit to conduct the affairs of this great empire. Some words used by the hon. Member for Pontefract fell upon his ear—namely, that he hoped the right hon. Baronet would form a strong Government. Now, he knew what a strong Government in Ireland meant. They had had a strong Government there in former days; and what did it cost this country? It cost it a rebellion. Therefore, when hon. Members talked of a strong Government, the words fell upon his ears not merely with a grating sound, but with a sound of horror, because the people of Ireland dreaded it as well as detested it. But the House was now occupied in talking about having a new settlement of the empire. What was it to be? The right hon. Baronet had left out of his calculation one great portion of the empire; he proposed nothing for the manufacturers of England, nothing for the foreign traders, nothing for the merchants. He and his friends left things as they were. This showed either their incapacity, their ignorance, or their hard-heartedness. It proved either their indifference, or their contempt for the people. On former occasions, one hon. Member spoke of the Irish as an "ignorant people;" another declared them to be "rebels;" while a third called them "emancipated cowards." These were the people respecting whom the right hon. Baronet had now observed so ominous a silence, and yet he and his Friends supported papers that had published speeches and dissertations ten-fold more dangerous than anything the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, ever made at Stroud. His charge against the right hon. Baronet was, that he had been deficient in his duty. It was his duty to come forward now, and the more so, because he was looked upon with suspicion, and declare the course he intended to pursue with respect to Ireland,

Was it not known, that his intention was to place at the head of the judicial authorities in this country that person who was peculiarly obnoxious to the people of Ireland—Lord Lyndhurst—who had stigmatized the Irish, as being “aliens in blood, aliens in language, and aliens in religion.” To show the candour of the party, when a bill was under discussion in which it was proposed to retain the seat of the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, while holding a judicial office, they opposed it; but when a bill was proposed containing a clause which excluded the Recorder of Dublin from holding a seat in the House, the same parties opposed that. Thus they would exclude the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Dr. Lushington) because he was a Liberal, and would retain the right hon. and learned Recorder of Dublin (Mr. Shaw) because he was a Tory. Much vituperation, at various times, had been cast upon the character of men who had held high office in Ireland; but he must be allowed to say, that no men ever acted with more justice in that country than Lord Normanby and Lord Ebrington had done. Lord Normanby, during his administration, acted in a manner that did him the greatest credit. He not only maintained the peace and security of the country, but he gained to himself the good will of the people throughout Ireland. The embarrassment of the right hon. Baronet arose with respect to Ireland, and the question was, how did he intend to get out of the difficulty? What was it he would do with the sly and insidious manner of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin? What would he do with the active and talented Member for Bandon, and what with the ferocious phraseology of the hon. Member for Coleraine? Why the right hon. Baronet would be check-mated by them, and he would not know what to do. And what had been the conduct of the opposite party to gain the few advantages they boasted of at the recent elections? He did not think that any honest body of men could, in any society or country, after having read the shameful facts disclosed at some recent elections, give their support to the right hon. Baronet. He would refer to the voting at Ludlow, at Cambridge, at Nottingham, and Sandwich. At Nottingham votes were purchased for 15*l.*, and at Sandwich they were to be obtained for

5*l.* Any individual who would have given more might have displaced the present Members, and have thus reduced the number of the right hon. Baronet's supporters. Why these were facts. He would ask the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, whether this was a fact—that in his own town, in the committee-room, a wall was built up, through which a hole was made, and that when the hand of the voter was put in, the holding up of five fingers meant five guineas, and ten fingers meant ten guineas, as the price of the vote. [Viscount Sandon: I don't know it.] No, the noble Lord does not know it; but does the noble Lord deny the fact? [Viscount Sandon: Yes.] Did the noble Lord deny that it was done at Ludlow? Did he deny that it was done at Sandwich? He would not enter into an unstatesmanlike conflict, or a boyish altercation, but he would refer the noble Lord to what he ought to have read and known—to reports on the table, where there was ample evidence of bribery and corruption. Why, it was but last night that a right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Wynn) gave notice of a motion to institute a prosecution for bribery and corruption. Did the House believe, that they would have ever heard of that proposition if there had not been the fear of a dissolution of Parliament? [“Oh, oh,”] He knew that hon. Members opposite did not like to hear of these things; but he had himself seen the money in the hands of some of the electors. Such had been the baseness of the electors and of the Tories in England. Could the same be said of election contests in Ireland. In the various scenes in which he had been engaged he could not lay his hand upon an individual who had ever received a shilling and he defied hon. Members to produce a case from all the records of elections in that country. Had hon. Members read the correspondence that had passed between Sir Thomas Cochrane and Mr Fitzroy Kelly, relating to the election at Ipswich which was an infamous proceeding. It was at first proposed that Sir T. Cochrane should pay 1,000*l.* to keep out a Whig or Radical. That he agreed to pay. He was then called upon to make it 2,000*l.* To that he ultimately agreed. Then a further sum of 500*l.* was demanded, and a threat made that if he did not pay it, some other candidate would be sought for, who would. To this Sir T. Cochrane

objected, on the ground that he had been guaranteed his seat for a less sum; and he then ceased to be a candidate. Such were the means by which the right hon. Baronet's majorities were obtained. He wished the right hon. Baronet joy of such majorities—now of sixteen, and now of thirty-two. But he would tell the right hon. Baronet that there was a country where once these things were practised, when the Minister of the day availed himself of the baseness of the electors and of his own partisans, and what was the result. It was not an infringement of the prerogative of the Crown; it was not the destruction of the rights of the people; but it was a total annihilation of the legislature. And that he ventured to prophesy would be the result of the venality and the corruption which had crept within these walls, and of all those shameful practices which cried out so loudly, if not for punishment, certainly for correction. It was by these practices that the majority of the right hon. Baronet had been produced; and he again wished the right hon. Baronet joy. But the people of England knew how to purge the House of these abuses, and how to get rid of these scenes of infamy. Seeing these statements lying on the table of the House, he should not be an honest man if he did not denounce a system which sapped the very vitals of the country, and which would, if not checked, ultimately destroy the constitution of England. The right hon. Baronet and the party to which he belonged had governed the country for upwards of sixty years; first, under Lord North, then under Mr. Pitt, afterwards under the Duke of Portland, then Mr. Perceval, and lastly under Lord Liverpool, during a period of warfare with the different nations of the world, and in every one of those conflicts they were beaten. They were beaten by Dr. Franklin in America—they were beaten by the French; in all their negotiations they were defeated, and it was reserved for the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to do what the Tories had not been able to do for nearly a century—to conquer the French in negotiation and to secure the peace of Europe. The right hon. Baronet had observed silence as to his policy. Now, it was very well known that many of those who supported the right hon. Gentleman were loudly calling for the repeal of the Catholic Emancipation Bill.

Was that bill to be repealed or not. [*"Cries of Oh, oh."*] Hon. Gentlemen might exclaim oh! but such things had been done before. Men had been induced to alter their opinions by the pressure from without; and who could tell how such a pressure might again operate? It might be all very well for the right hon. Baronet to keep silence, but he must be allowed to tell the right hon. Baronet that silence would no longer do. The people of Ireland, would insist upon receiving an answer. The people of England were asking for cheap bread and cheap sugar, but the people of Ireland were asking for what was of more worth to them than bread or sugar, they were asking for the liberties and privileges of freemen. These the noble Lord opposite had already threatened to take away. The people of Ireland, therefore, would not trust the right hon. Baronet or his party. In proof of this he would refer the House to the address which had recently received the signatures of noblemen and gentlemen in Ireland, possessors of property there of between forty and fifty millions value, and which was about to be laid before the Queen. In that address were expressed the sentiments of men of the greatest wealth and highest station in Ireland, who deprecated any change of administration which would confer power on a party who had always ruled over that country in the spirit of tyranny and domination. He had now done. He called upon the people of England not to trust those individuals who had ever been the enemies of liberty, and of the advancement of civilization and peace, but to uphold those men who had done justice to the cause of freedom, and were anxious to promote every liberal measure. What was the estimation in which the Government of this country, and more especially the character of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was held in France? He would refer to a speech which was recently made by one who was a distinguished member of the Chamber of Deputies. M. Berryer, when speaking of the Government of this country, said of Lord Palmerston, that it was true that the noble Lord was not a friend to France, he was not a friend of his (M. Berryer's) country; but, nevertheless, that noble Lord had done much for England. He had established her naval and military honour, and her commercial renown; her flag had been

raised by him in the west, and in the north; in the east, and in the south; he had carried on negotiations with foreign countries which had established the peace of Europe, and while France was foiled, France was conquered, England by his policy and talent was placed at the head of Europe. That was the character given by a French senator of the noble Lord who displayed such talent in the cause of virtue and in the cause of his country, and yet there sat the right hon. Baronet and his friends, the calumniators of the noble Lord, regardless of the high deeds he had achieved, by which he had done honour to his country and to his Queen, and had upheld the liberties of the people. And why did they calumniate him? Because he and his colleagues were anxious to supply the wants, the necessities, and comforts of all. When such men fall they will fall like honest men; and when they do fall and their principles fall, then may we bid adieu to the rights and liberties of the people, and the honour and prerogatives of the Crown. For both I am ready to lift up my voice, to draw my sword, and shed my blood.

*Lord Teignmouth*: Sir,—I will not refuse to my hon. and learned Friend who has just sat down the merit to which he lays claim of uncorrupted patriotism: nor will I dispute with him the exclusive statesmanship to which he pretends: but this I must assert, and probably with the concurrence of the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, that notwithstanding his abilities, and his ardour characteristic of the people to which he belongs, and of which he represents a large constituency, his speech has proved but an ebullition of party spirit, and has not contained a single argument calculated to resist the resolution of my right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth, or to uphold the tottering condition of her Majesty's Government. Nor, although

"With a withering look

He the war-denouncing trumpet took,"

has he in any degree roused his party from the uninterrupted dependency which has marked the speeches of all who preceded him on the same side. The addresses of the two Cabinet Ministers who have defended the Government, exhibited a singular discrepancy. My right hon. and learned Friend the Secretary at War, contended that the measures of Ministers

should not be urged as ground of confidence or of distrust; that the imputation or failure of these, originated in the weakness of Government, and that this weakness had necessarily resulted from the equalization of the balance of parties produced by the Reform Bill, and that no Government could possibly possess the strength which might be looked for by some, constituted as the House of Commons had become by that measure. Before concluding the observations with which I will trouble the House, I will notice the opinion of my right hon. Friend on the effect of the Reform Bill: in the meantime I allude to his argument with a view to contrasting it with that of his colleague the right hon. the President of the Board of Control. That hon. Baronet did not abandon the defence of the measures of Government; on the contrary, he challenged, in favour of several which he enumerated the approbation of the House. Of the two different courses pursued by the hon. Gentlemen, I am disposed to prefer that of the right hon. Baronet. I will not deny the merit of some of the measures of Government; for some of those for the support of the Established Church, and the Amendment of the Poor Law; the noble Lord, as the head of her Majesty's Government in this House deserves the highest praise; and above all, Sir, for the noble stand which he made last Session in defence of the privileges of this House, or rather of the integrity of the Constitution, he was entitled to immortal honour. But the passing of some good measures does not prove that the Ministry have enjoyed the confidence of the House; it proves only that they were met, not by a factious opposition, but one, on the contrary, ready to afford a cordial support to any of a beneficial tendency. In regard to Church questions, did the conduct of the Government merit the confidence of the House? what had been its opinion respecting the Appropriation Clause? had not the House repudiated it? A motion was brought forward some nights ago by the hon. Member for Leicester, declaring that the exaction of the payment of Church-rates from persons not professing the doctrines of the Church was a violation of the principles of civil and religious liberty. This proposition, striking at the root of the Establishment, was opposed on that ground, by the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies. How was he



supported on that occasion? by only five Members on his side of the House, who were not in office or closely allied to Members in office. The hon. Gentleman who last spoke, confined his defence of the Government to their policy in regard to Ireland. The Ministers had proposed two most important measures in reference to that country; the Appropriation Clause, to which I have just alluded, and the clause of the Registration Bill for lowering the franchise. These, in the estimation of my hon. Friend, would have been very salutary; I, on the contrary, think they would have proved most mischievous: the one striking at the foundation of the Church Establishment, the other tending to subvert the civil constitution of the Government. But the question, so far as the confidence of the House is involved, is not as to the opinion which the hon. Member or myself may hold respecting these measures, but as to that of the House respecting them. Now, they were both condemned and rejected by the House, and, therefore, the degree of confidence which the House has extended to the Ministers, must be estimated not by the measures which they have actually adopted under the check and control of a vigilant Conservative opposition, but by those which they would have introduced had they been permitted to carry out their own scheme of misgovernment. Thus estimating the feeling of the House, its want of confidence in the Irish policy of the Government has been unequivocally declared. There is another and principal ground on which the Ministry have forfeited the confidence of the House, the administration of the finances. From the moment of their accession to office, they abandoned the old, wholesome system of the Conservative Government, that of maintaining a surplus of the income over expenditure, and substituted for it one absolutely reckless and profligate. It is true that my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, has produced a Budget; but was this calculated to make good the financial deficiency? was it brought forward with a view to its being carried? Did not the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, on the very night of the question of the sugar duties, anticipate the discussion by a speech, the talent of which has deservedly received the highest commendation, but which was precisely calculated to defeat the immediate object

of securing the realization of income, if that indeed had been the object of Government? On the contrary did not that speech embroil the whole discussion by the introduction into it of all possible topics? and had it not consequently proved a debate "*de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis.*" Notwithstanding all the efforts of Members on this side of the House, to restrict it within its proper limits? But the Budget has broken down; for, though as I understand the noble Lord intends bringing forward his proposed alteration in the corn duties, the whole sum, which he hopes to obtain, should that scheme be successful, would provide but for a very small portion of the deficiency. I will not enter into the foreign policy of the Government further than to observe, that their measures were forced upon them by a vicious system of finance. We are opposed to powerful nations subject to weak Governments, who look to the sinews of our warfare; and whose hostile disposition and menaces increase exactly in proportion to the inadequacy of our pecuniary resources, and it would have proved a far wiser and less expensive course, had Ministers, by a prudent management of our means, and upholding the financial credit of the country, prevented the necessity of taking up arms or increasing our instruments of defence, than by appealing to our soldiers and our sailors for the vindication of our national honour, and protection of our national interests. On the subject of the prerogative of the Crown, two questions have been brought forward, materially affecting its prerogative and dignity, one respecting the income of the prince consort. On that question, the noble Lord declared, that the refusal of the sum asked for, would be an insult to royalty: yet, notwithstanding this assertion, the House had rejected the noble Lord's proposition by a large majority. The second occurred the other night, on the motion of the hon. Member for Finsbury, which the noble Lord steadfastly opposed with just ground, of its being a direct invasion of the royal prerogative. How many Members did the noble Lord muster in the division, excepting those in office, or nearly connected with those in office? only seven: just the number, which previous to the Reform Bill, a single nobleman could command, who was thus enabled, as it was said by Lord Grey, to approach the minister of the day with

the intelligible, "We are seven." But the Ministers rely on votes of confidence as indicative of the support of the House; that which they secured during the last Session, and that to which they now aspire. With regard to the former, it is true, that Ministers gained a majority of twenty-one; but what was the result? That their followers availed themselves of the opportunity afforded to them by the votes they had given on that occasion, to withdraw their support on other questions, and thus to withhold that very confidence which they had professedly tendered. The Ministers' hope of a majority on the present renewal of the question of confidence, depends on the course pursued by the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, and those who act with him. In regard to that course, that noble Lord and his Friends appear to me more dangerous political characters than the Ministers themselves. The Ministers have brought forward some apology for a Budget, whilst these Gentlemen reject it, deprive the Government of its only alleged means of maintaining the financial credit of the country by providing for a large and growing deficiency and still repose their confidence in that very Government. I should think the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, would himself deprecate such friends, and not desire such support of the tottering fabric of his Government.

*Non tali auxilio : non defensoribus istis.*

There are two courses open to the noble Lord, at the head of the Government, on the failure of his present scheme, either to resign the administration of affairs, or to dissolve the Parliament. I will advert only to the latter. In resorting to that alternative, does the noble Lord expect, that his budget will be calmly and deliberately considered by the country? Is not the discussion which has already taken place in the House upon parts of it, but a sample of what may be expected in the more general debate which will prevail amidst the distractions of a general election? Will the people consider the merits of the several propositions submitted to them? Will they heed the cry of cheap bread, cheap timber, and cheap sugar? No, they will regard these as good in themselves, but inasmuch as they are tendered by a Whig Government only as additional items in the catalogue of broken promises and additional inducements to

distrust. What, then, is the object of the noble Lord? Is it that perceiving the failure of his schemes, and discovering, that he has entangled himself inextricably in a web of his own contrivance, he has at length found it necessary to abandon his system of trick and truckling; and, mindful of the austerer virtues and manlier resolution of an unfortunate ancestor, he has determined, if possible, to avert the contempt of the country, by doing something to merit its execration? Has he adopted as his rule of conduct the advice of the poet—

*"Aude aliquid brevibus Gyaris et carcere  
dignum,  
Si vis esse aliquem."*

The Ministers have claimed credit for the little agitation which has been excited by their appeal to the passions of the people; but for this they deserve no thanks, as there are few parts of the country in which attempts have not been made to rouse popular feeling, however signally they may have failed. What, then, is the prospect afforded by a dissolution of Parliament? I have alluded to the opinion expressed by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary at War, respecting the operation of the Reform Bill, as precluding the possibility of strong Government. I will not, however, for one, despair of that measure. Observing the state of public feeling, and perceiving the growing conviction, that it is impossible to carry on any plan of Government under present circumstances, I cannot help indulging the sanguine hope, that men of moderate opinions are disposed to waive some points of disagreement, with a view to the support of a better system; that the next Parliament will consist more decidedly of those, on the one hand, who are desirous of maintaining, and of those, on the other, who would subvert the Constitution; and that the numerous class to which I have just referred, will swell the Conservative phalanx, and rally around the standard of the right hon. Baronet below me. With regard to the state of public feeling to which the hon. Member for Finsbury dissents, I can only say, that representing as I do a large constituency, I have been sometimes surprised at the mode in which that hon. Member occasionally misrepresents the feelings of the people. I have lately received three deputations from the Chartists of Marylebone, commanding, as

they allege, 600 votes, whose language was, that they preferred the Tories to the Whigs, inasmuch as the former would do something, whilst the Whigs would do nothing, for the good of the people. I do not doubt the result of an appeal to the nation, and trust, that with God's blessing, it will produce a stable, vigorous, and efficient Government. Sir, the first occasion, about three years ago, on which I had the honour of addressing the House on any public business, I stated my want of confidence in her Majesty's present Government. I have seen nothing during the period which has since elapsed, to alter, but, on the contrary, much to confirm that opinion. I avail myself of the last opportunity which I shall probably enjoy of addressing a British House of Commons to repeat the declaration of my distrust in the Administration of the noble Lord, and to express the satisfaction which I feel at the prospect of his dynasty drawing to its close.

Mr. Ingham, although he agreed with much that had fallen from the noble Lord, could not vote in favour of the resolution of the right hon. Member for Tamworth. His reasons might not be so satisfactory to the other side as his vote; but as he had not the honour of being admitted to either party, he was the better able to look at a question of this kind impartially. The proposition consisted of two parts:—the first was, that the present Ministers had not the power to carry into effect measures essential to the welfare of the State, and by voting the affirmative, he should not more emphatically mark his opinion than he had done already in supporting the recent motion of the noble Member for Liverpool, and on other similar occasions. The second branch of the proposition was, that the present Government, not having been able to carry their measures into effect, by continuing to hold office, were guilty of a violation of the spirit of the constitution. The House was thus called upon to lay down an important constitutional maxim, and to express an opinion nakedly, and in the abstract. He could not give his assent to the statement, that Ministers had been guilty of a violation of the spirit of the constitution. If he thought that Ministers would continue in office, in defiance of the representatives of the people, after the people had been duly appealed to—if he thought that they would continue in office after the people

had been legitimately called upon to express their opinion, he should most certainly vote in favour of the motion of the right hon. Baronet. But both the President of the Board of Control, and the right hon. Member for Edinburgh, the first impliedly, and the last distinctly, had produced in his mind a conviction that it was the intention of Ministers, in due time, to make their appeal to the constituency of the kingdom. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh, in language which he (Mr. Ingham) had been sorry to hear from a Cabinet Minister, had said that he hoped to revive the spirit of 1831. He assumed, therefore, that there could be no doubt upon the point. Could he say, then, that it was a violation of the spirit of the constitution, because a Minister, hitherto enjoying the confidence of the Crown, remained at his post, until he saw that the sense of the nation was against him? If the Government thought that the people were in their favour, they were quite right in continuing where they were, and in going to the country. He understood that they would persevere no longer than the constituency would support them; but first, they wished to have an opportunity of stating their sentiments fully and freely, that the country might know what they had to expect. He looked upon the conduct of Mr. Pitt as heroic when he adhered to the Crown, and would not abandon his post, as long as he was supported by the nation. It was not for him to say, that such conduct was a violation of the spirit of the constitution; but if, after an appeal to the constituency of this realm, Ministers did not accomplish what they expected, then, indeed, they incurred a heavy responsibility. During the present Session he had frequently been constrained to give his vote against Ministers, sometimes not without pain and regret, so that, at all events, in what he now said, it could not be urged that he was biassed in their favour. His own opinion was, that Ministers would be disappointed in their appeal to the nation. There was an extreme distaste in the country to continue agitation, and he apprehended that the majority of the Members returned, would be persons who would be united in one cause—that of promoting and securing public tranquillity, and of supporting the existing laws against those who were anxious to bewilder the people with hopeless projects, and to dazzle them

with promises never intended to be realised. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh had stated, that if he were disappointed by the result of an election, he should retire into opposition, content with having discharged his duty. He (Mr. Ingham) apprehended that the right hon. Gentleman's patriotism would be put to the test; but while he objected to the measures of Ministers, he did not think that their course had yet been unconstitutional, and he could not therefore vote for the resolution of the right hon. Member for Tamworth.

Mr. *Hutt* had listened with great satisfaction to the speech just delivered by the hon. Member for North Shields. The resolution, and the speech of the right hon. Baronet were, in fact, sufficiently answered by the notorious fact that Government intended to appeal to the country as soon as the necessary business of the Session had been concluded, and, in his opinion, they would pursue a course injurious to the constitution, and dangerous to the public welfare, if they abandoned office merely because the right hon. Baronet thought fit to propose a resolution of want of confidence. If Ministers were defeated in the House, the spirit of the constitution required, that they should appeal to the country for its opinion, on the line of policy they had pursued. Mr. Pitt was defeated fourteen times in as many successive divisions, and yet his appeal to the country was considered a sufficient justification for his remaining in office. If, then, the view taken by Mr. Pitt were sound, what became of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite? It had been said, that the present Government had lost the confidence of the country. That was a point which would be far more satisfactorily settled at the ensuing elections, when the fiat of the people should be pronounced, than by the opinion of any individual in that House, however respectable that individual might be, or however much his opinion might be entitled to consideration. But his opinion was, that if her Majesty's Government had in any degree lost the confidence of the country, it was because they had not brought forward at an earlier period those great measures of commercial reform which the right hon. Baronet had now succeeded in defeating. The people were, no doubt, discontented, and they had reason to be discontented, with the Reform Bill and with the different Governments since its

passing, when they saw, that those very monopolies which were so grievous had remained for so long a time untouched. And so impressed with the necessity of a change were all parties, that he believed the only real difference between the right hon. Baronet opposite and the present Government was, that whereas they brought forward these measures at a time that they would be acceptable to the public, whilst he would postpone them till they had lost all their grace and a great portion of their benefit. He wished to speak of the right hon. Baronet with all the respect which he sincerely entertained, but the misfortune was, that the right hon. Baronet had not ventured to act upon his own feelings in consequence of the ties of party which fettered him; he feared that the right hon. Baronet was confiding to party what was meant for the country; and he thought, that it would be said in after times, that he had been engaged in opposition to measures which he must ultimately promote, and that when he did at last bring them forward, he would be deserted by the very party for whom he had sacrificed present popularity and future respect. He was satisfied, that the present measures must ultimately succeed. Unrestricted trade, although it was not now fashionable in that House, was the ancient principle of England; when she first rose to eminence, she had declared, that her ports were open to the whole world, and he could not but think, that the proposals now brought forward, although circumstances concurred in making them temporarily fail, would rally round the Government the strong opinions of the people, and be willingly adopted in a future Parliament.

Viscount *Sandon* said, that whatever gratification the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down might derive from the vote of the hon. and learned Member for South Shields (Mr. Ingham), the application of the reasoning of that hon. Member would afford, in his opinion, but little satisfaction to the Members of her Majesty's Government. He knew the hon. and learned Gentleman was distinguished for his high attainments, but at the same time he must say, that his speech evinced a subtlety of reasoning far more suited to the closet than to the practical affairs of life. The hon. Member for South Shields had justified the maintenance of office by her Majesty's Ministers on one ground

only. He admitted, that they were unable to carry certain measures which they thought essential to the welfare of the country, but he justified their retention of office on the ground of a dissolution of which the House at present knew nothing, and on its result, which the hon. and learned Member himself said was not only problematical, but which he thought would be unsuccessful. Now, what did the House know of this talked of dissolution? If they knew anything—if they could derive any knowledge from the acts of the Government—it was this, that they would continue to discharge the functions of a Government as long as that House permitted them—for, though beaten on one item of their Budget, they contentedly brought forward another, and it was only when the present resolution was proposed, that the House had obtained from them something like the glimmering of a dissolution, and had not even yet obtained from them any positive assurance that they were not prepared to continue that course of humiliation to which they had for some time been subjecting themselves by retaining office without the power to carry their measures. For his own part, he felt no difficulty as to the course which he should pursue. He felt a want of confidence in her Majesty's Ministers on almost every point, and, if any one point more than another could induce him to proclaim this want of confidence, it was that they came down to that House at a time when commerce was labouring under great difficulties, and selected that precise moment to shake and confound every branch of commerce by a series of propositions which they had never hoped, and, probably, never intended, or wished to carry. With regard to the sugar duties and the timber duties, it was scarcely possible they could have expected to carry them; and as to the Corn-laws, the Ministers themselves confessed when they proposed the alteration that they did not expect to carry it. Was it, then, common sense, was it common honesty, on an occasion like the present, when the commerce of the country was in such a state, to come down to that House and plunge the commercial, agricultural, manufacturing, and monetary interests of the country into confusion, by throwing down the apple of discord among different classes, in the face of their own declaration that they were questions which ought not to be mooted without a certainty

of their being carried? Those of her Majesty's Ministers in that House might perhaps say they were not responsible for the debates in the other House of Parliament; but they could not evade a responsibility for the declarations of the Prime Minister in the other House of Parliament. That Prime Minister had, indeed, attempted to explain away the declaration that he made last year, that it would be an act of madness in any person to touch the Corn-laws by some limitation of time and circumstances; but he had not attempted, nor could he, explain away another declaration which he then made, that it was a subject which ought not to be touched without there was a moral certainty of its being carried. That certainty not only the Ministers had not, but they were certain of the contrary. A Government which was guilty of such a dereliction of duty as this, whatever might be its other merits, was a Government which was not fit to be trusted with the management of the great commercial interests of the nation. As to the sugar duties, he did not know how the Government could possibly suppose, that those who under circumstances of greater temptation last year resisted the proposed change should this year have assented to it; or what right they had to expect that a Government avowedly weak could succeed this year in carrying a measure which last Session they had most resolutely opposed. He did not wish particularly to recur to the sugar question; but as he had no opportunity of replying on that occasion, and as he had been so taunted with mock humanity and hypocrisy, and as the right hon. Member for Edinburgh last night had again taunted him, and all those who had voted with him, with hypocrisy, he begged to remind that right hon. Member and his colleagues that they last year resisted the selfsame motion on the selfsame grounds; and unless the right hon. Gentleman meant to say, that all honest and right feeling was confined to the Ministerial benches, and that those who opposed the measures of the Government must necessarily be hypocrites, why, he should like to know, was he to be denounced as a hypocrite for this year retaining the opinions and the policy which he expressed last year, and which last year the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues also maintained? Hypocrisy, indeed! The Government now appealed to the miseries of the people. Why,

if this had weight with them, why did they not bring forward their plan last year, when the price of sugar was very high? Why were they silent last year as to the misery of the people, and only availed themselves of this plea when sugar was so much cheaper, and consequently more easily within the reach of the consumers? He had also been taunted with the course which the Anti-slavery Society of Liverpool had taken on this question. He lamented that course, and he thought it a melancholy chapter in political history; but what was the first anticipation of the society in London, and of those who had usually guided and expressed the feelings of the anti-slavery body throughout England? Their expression of opinion was in accordance with the resolution he had the honour to propose, and in accordance with the sentiments so eloquently expressed by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets. But a few days afterwards some of the ardent supporters of the Government were induced to step in to the rescue, and by intrigue and arrangement a resolution was passed, sacrificing the principles of former years to the purposes of political partizanship, and for the first time it was declared by an Anti-slavery Society, that the best way to put down slavery was to submit free-grown sugar to the utmost possible competition. And what was the state of the Anti-slavery Society of Liverpool at that time? After the emancipation of the slaves in our colonies, that society had dwindled away, and many of its most active members had discontinued their attendance, considering the object had been already accomplished. A few members who attached more importance to the introduction of Brazilian sugar than to the consummation of the great experiment of emancipation, assembled together the crumbs of the whole society, and passed a resolution in the name of the Liverpool Anti-slavery Society which he had been assured by several of the old and most influential members of that association, did not express the sentiments of the anti-slavery body in Liverpool; and he had with him two letters from parties well acquainted with the feelings of that body, expressing the deepest regret that such a resolution should have been carried. And this was the way in which these Ministerial demonstrations were got up; and it might teach them what reliance was to be placed upon

declarations so evidently opposed to those great principles which the anti-slavery body had for so many years consistently advocated. That very morning a Birmingham paper had fallen into his hands, in a corner of which he had found a letter to the editor of the *Standard*, dated May 19, signed "Charles Sturge" (the name of Sturge was pretty well known in that House, in connection with the anti-slavery party), in which the writer stated—

"Sir—After the manner in which my brother, Joseph Sturge, is mentioned in the *Standard* of yesterday, I think it but due to him, that you should inform your numerous readers, that he is now in the United States, doing all in his power to assist the abolitionists there; and that, if in England, I am sure he would oppose, to the utmost of his ability, this abominable Whig attempt to introduce slave-grown sugar.

"I am, very respectfully, &c.

"CHARLES STURGE."

There was not, then, a universal feeling among the anti-slavery party in favour of the introduction of slave-grown sugar. If he really wanted any evidence of the misery under which the country was labouring, in consequence of a Government as weak as this retaining office, not after a single defeat, as the hon. and learned Member for North Shields seemed to suppose, but after they had found their numbers progressively diminishing—when Parliament after Parliament saw smaller numbers returned at each succeeding general election, whilst each single election had shown the growing feeling of the people, that the Ministers had less and less the confidence of the country. [*No, no!*] He would find it in recent events in that House. The facts were notorious, out of twenty seats that had been changed since the last election, sixteen had been decided in favour of the Opposition. [*Money did it.*] Yes, "money, money!" What a foolish and wretched attempt to explain the result. It was just such a cry as a gentleman who had lost his election, made use of on the hustings to throw dust in the eyes of his supporters, saying, "See what money has done for the opposition, and there is no remedy for this but the ballot." If there were corruption, why was it not as strong in favour of the Government, as it was supposed to be on the part of the Opposition? And why not? Were they more scrupulous in the use of these means? Had

they forgotten St. Albans? Had they forgotten Stafford, occupied by the Attorney-general? Had they forgotten Newark, occupied by the Solicitor-general? Had they forgotten Nottingham, occupied by the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Control? Had they not place after place, showing that wherever money was wanted, and could be spared, it would be used? It might be true, that in some places there might have been corruption on the part of the Opposition; but in many in which it was charged, he knew that it had not been used; and the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. Grattan) who talked of having actually seen the money in the hands in some of the electors seemed to know little of the ordinary course in this country; he must have relied on common report, and common report in these election matters was little to be trusted. With regard to the vote of a want of confidence, he was about to say, that if anything more strongly showed the mischief of the present weakness of the Government, it was the very transaction of the other night. By their own strength they could not prevent an encroachment on the prerogative of the Crown; they were obliged to depend upon that (the Opposition) side of the House, and if they by any mode diminished the number of Gentlemen on that side of the House, they would have no means or power to defend the prerogative of the Crown. And finally he thought that it was not possible to find instances more illustrative of the evils of such a Government than the proceedings of the last two or three years, during which the Government had obtained their principal addition to their supporters by throwing overboard every principle they had at some time or other supported, to obtain the votes of a party that was not attached to them by any community of principle, but by a common hatred of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Viscount *Morpeth* wished, in the first place, to express his approval and acknowledgment of the tone and moderation of temper in which the speech of the right hon. Baronet who had submitted this resolution to the House was conceived. Whether the speech of the noble Lord who had just sat down was conceived in the same vein—whether he had shown the same qualities and the same abstinence from party heat, the same disposition to

fairness, the same desire to do justice to political opponents, and the same desire to acknowledge the merits and the exertions of political adversaries, he must leave the House to judge. The noble Lord had not confined his attacks to the members of her Majesty's Government, but he had included in it many men and many bodies of men who had spent the greater portion of their lives and had long devoted their exertions to strike off the last fetters of the slave, whilst the noble Lord was himself co-operating with many of those who had done their utmost to prolong and rivet those chains. It had been said that the abolition of slavery was carried to please the "cracked" county of York. It was not his duty to impugn the motives of any person who had taken part in the recent discussions, but when he appealed again to the opinions of his constituents, he would not shrink from any discussion or any responsibility, and he had no dread of any ill result from the part he had taken on the question of the sugar duties. While, however, he gave the right hon. Baronet credit for the tone and moderation of his speech, he could not carry his commendation to the resolution which followed that speech, not because he thought the resolution intemperate or factious, but first because of the total want of historical and logical soundness which he thought had been fixed upon it by his right hon. Friend the Secretary at War, and because also it appeared to be ineffectual and inoperative: it seemed thrown out as a kind of squib just at the present moment to keep the great body of the supporters of the right hon. Baronet from more mischievous and dangerous pastimes. The resolution parroted much of the spirit which might be combined from two opposite currents of opinion—it might, in fact, be taken as a mixture, compounded with all the art for which the right hon. Gentleman was so famous: it was an emollient and a sedative to let the blood of his more ardent followers down from fever heat and stop a more serious and destructive outbreak. It was impossible not to see that the concluding part was couched with especial reference to the expression of the noble Lord the Secretary of the Colonies used upon the retirement from office of the right hon. Baronet in 1835. The resolution of the right hon. Baronet, as well as his speeches, was, in fact, redolent of "Hansard," and upon this occasion, notwithstanding the

assurance he had given to the contrary, it was the expression of his noble Friend in which the right hon. Gentleman found his consolation. That resolution seemed capable of being viewed from two points. In the first instance, that in which it had been presented by the right hon. Baronet, on which he had founded the entire substance of his speech—that which was intended to refer to the spirit of the Constitution; and, secondly, the view of its real and practical import. Now, with respect to the constitutional view, the right hon. Baronet mainly rested his resolution upon the conduct of the Government in maintaining office, after the parliamentary defeats they had experienced, as contrary to the spirit of the constitution. Now, he must think, that even upon this technical ground, the right hon. Baronet, and the noble Lord, and all that had followed, had met only with qualified success. He was by no means disposed to admit, that on the narrowest and most technical ground, the conduct of the Government in remaining in office was contrary to the letter, the spirit, or the essence of the constitution. He put out of view the defeats which the Government had sustained before the late decision on the sugar duties. They might have been right, or they might have been wrong, in not considering those defeats sufficient notices to quit, or as conclusive indications that they had lost the confidence of the House. It might, however, be remarked, that no longer ago than in the very last Session of Parliament, they had received a directly contrary assurance, by a majority of twenty-one in that House, from whose vote they learned that they retained, and still possessed, the confidence of the House of Commons. But they might have been possibly wrong in retaining their seats after the defeats which they had sustained during an administration which had lasted over six years; and on the other hand, the right hon. Baronet might be right in going on with a Government after he had sustained at least an equal number, and he believed a greater number of defeats. [No, no.] He believed, that if he summed up the defeats sustained by the right hon. Baronet, he should find that their addition would tally very closely with those of the present Government; but at all events there was this difference between the Government of the right hon. Baronet, and

that which at present advised her Majesty, which was, that the series of defeats sustained by the right hon. Baronet was unbroken by a single victory, or one instance of success, except when those who were the supporters of the present Government supported it, on the question of the malt duties; and these defeats were concentrated within a period of three months. But in speaking of this, it was not his object to attack the right hon. Baronet or to defend his own party, but when they were told, as they had been told to-night, that they had themselves laid down and stated the proposition, that even a majority of five was not sufficient to enable them to carry on the Government with benefit to the public service, without diverting to the circumstances which followed the proceeding they had then adopted, under which the vote had been given, he thought, that it must not be forgotten, that a noble Duke, who was at the head of the party of which the right hon. Baronet was also a leader (the Duke of Wellington), had told them that the Government had no ground at all for resigning office, and that they were wrong in taking that step. Therefore, if the argument in favour of the necessity of their resignation found a precedent in anything which they had themselves done, it must at least be remembered that this very precedent had incurred the expression of censure on the part of the most distinguished of the leaders of the party of the right hon. Baronet. But while he referred to these past transactions, he would admit that the late division on the question of the sugar duties did certainly produce a state of things, from which it must have been apparent to every one that matters could not be suffered to go on in their present condition, and that the Government did not possess sufficient authority in the House to carry through those measures which they had submitted to its notice. [Cheers.] On that point, he was glad to see that they were quite agreed, and on that, therefore, no controversy could arise between them. Then he supposed that the question which suggested itself was, why they had not resigned? The resolution seemed to convey a censure on their remaining in office for one hour after that defeat, as being contrary to the spirit of the constitution. It had been shown that that was not without precedent,—and precedent which should be dear to Conserva-



tive ears. He would not go again into the case of Mr. Pitt in 1784, to which the House had been told that the existing circumstances bore no analogy. Certainly the defeat of Mr. Pitt was not sustained on the ground of any alteration in the fiscal duties of the country, and the Government of the present day was not opposed by Mr. Fox, and so far certainly there was no analogy between the two cases, but there might be some analogy in this, that at that day as at this, the Government were opposed by a coalition of those who during the whole course of their lives had been most opposed to each other. But he did not think that the right hon. Baronet gave a correct statement of the nature of the defeats which Mr. Pitt sustained and which did not induce a relinquishment of office. The right hon. Baronet said "The objection to the continuance of Mr. Pitt was not that the confidence of the House of Commons was withheld from the measures which he proposed. There were surmises or allegations that Mr. Pitt owed his power to the exercise of undue influence; that the King's name had been made use of for the purpose of influencing elections. The objection therefore, was taken at the outset to the administration of Mr. Pitt. Before Mr. Pitt could take his seat, hostile resolutions were come to; and before he could bring forward any one act of Government upon which the sense of the House of Commons could be taken, resolutions were affirmed implying objections, not to the acts of that Government, but to the principle upon which it was constituted. The principle involved was not the principle that a Minister ought to have the confidence of the House of Commons for the purpose of carrying on the Government, but it was contended that Mr. Pitt, having a majority in the House of Commons, was attempting to control the constitutional prerogative of the Crown, and, without reference to the public acts of the Government, implied beforehand a want of confidence in that Administration." Now, it was true that there were repeated resolutions implying want of confidence on the part of the House of Commons towards his proceeding with the Government, but there, were objections to his measures also. The East-India Bill was rejected by a majority of 8, in a House of 436 Members, that being a bill which had attracted the attention of the nation in the most material

degree. On the 6th March Mr. Fox moved and carried a motion for postponing the consideration of the Mutiny Bill, by a majority of 1. He was not contending that Mr. Pitt should have given way to these motions; but he was showing that these motions, especially the East-India Bill, did interfere with the proceedings of the Government. He had shown that on one of the most prominent measures which then occupied the attention of the House, Mr. Pitt was signally defeated. With regard to the retirement of Sir Robert Walpole from office, that did not take place on account of his being defeated on any legislative measure; but it was well known that a question of such apparently small importance as the Chippenham election had produced an event of so great moment. But it was said, that Mr. Pitt had dissolved a Parliament which had not been summoned by himself. He did not see how the constitutional point of view in which this resolution was brought forward, at all bore upon this argument. He did not see how, in a mere constitutional point of view, it could enter into their consideration, under the auspices of what minister the existing Parliament was called, because it was plain that it was a gross offence to the spirit of the constitution of the country, to talk of a Parliament being chosen by this or that Government, because the Members were chosen by the people and by the constituent body, and therefore if, in a constitutional point of view, an adverse vote, or a repetition of such must necessarily be fatal to the continuance of the Government in office, they must equally, in a constitutional point of view, be fatal in one as well as another state of things. He came now to the dissolution of Parliament by the right hon. Baronet in 1834. It was true that Parliament was not convoked under the auspices of the right hon. Baronet, but under those of the Minister whom he followed; and he did not see how it could be said that the right hon. Baronet had any grounds for resolving on that dissolution, more than those which would justify the Government of the present day adopting that step, unless it could be pretended that it was a matter of more importance for the consideration and decision of the country, whether they would have the right hon. Baronet for Prime Minister or not, than whether they would have additional facilities given to commerce, the introduction of cheap

sugar, and the admission of foreign corn, in lieu of fresh taxes and augmented burdens. Therefore, while it was conceded that, since the division upon the sugar duties, it had been made manifest, that the Government did not sufficiently possess the confidence of the present House of Commons to render them able to carry on the public business, or to bring to a completion any important measures, he did not think that it was in any way opposed to the spirit, or at variance with the true meaning of the constitution, that the Government should ascertain what was the sense of the people and the constituent body with regard to the measures which they brought forward. It had not been stated by the right hon. Baronet, or by any hon. Member who had followed him, and he did not think that it could be stated, that under no conceivable condition of affairs, or in no possible conjunction of circumstances, the Ministers of the Crown, though defeated in Parliament, were not entitled, in the spirit of the constitution, to go on with the business of the Government, so long as to enable the Crown to appeal from Parliament to the people. He did not think that hon. Members could contend that the Crown should be so debarred from its prerogative. They could not say, that if a Minister of the Crown who had brought forward a measure of great public importance, and who had been defeated in his attempts to carry that measure through Parliament, but who thought, that the measure would meet with a very great and warm support throughout the country—he did not think that it could be said, that that Minister should be debarred from testing the sense of the country upon that measure. The noble Lord who had last spoken talked as if it was the height of guilt and criminality to bring forward measures intimately concerning the interests of the country at a time when those interests were labouring under depression; but he asked, at what better period could such measures be introduced to public notice? He would put the case, in which he might be said to be personally interested. It was his lot to represent the largest constituent body in this empire. Within the last few days he had presented and laid on the Table of the House, petitions signed by thousands, tens of thousands, and he believed he might even say, hundreds of thousands of persons, who

belonged to every branch of trade and industry in the country, and chiefly by persons connected with the woollen trade—the oldest staple trade of the country. He was far from willing to form or to represent any exaggerated view of the public distress. He did not wish to paint it in too glowing colours, or to make it the ground of any appeal to the passions of the people. It was true, that the right hon. Baronet had given the House, on two occasions, he thought, a grave admonition upon the subject of agitation, nor would he reproach him for the part which he had taken at previous periods of his public life; but he confessed, that when he was thus admonished, he was induced to turn from the lecture to the lecturer. He could not but think it better, that those who concurred in any object, by which agitation was carried on, should head it, and guide and master it, than that those who differed from its object should crouch to it and be overcome by it. But he had been referring to the petitions which he had presented to the House, and he was about to state, that the representations which reached him from quarters where he could place implicit reliance, confirmed the representations which had been made, that business had been never known to be in such a state of depression as at the present time; that many branches of employment were entirely stationary, and that many of the mills and factories of the country were either closed, or working only during half their usual time; that a vast number of hands were unemployed; and that bad as was the prospect of the present state of things, there was no satisfactory glimpse of improvement in the future. Her Majesty's Government had brought forward certain measures, which formed the groundwork of their present dispute, but which were calculated in their view greatly to allay the existing evils, and to give rise to a better order of things. The House of Commons refused to accede to these propositions. Why, then, was there anything at variance with the spirit of the constitution, if the Ministers, who thought they had right on their side, who knew that they were called upon by a large part of the people to stand by their measures, and who had reason to believe, that the people would to a great extent—to what extent he would not venture to prophesy—support and uphold those measures—was there anything at

variance with the spirit of the constitution, he asked, if those Ministers of the Crown, on being defeated in Parliament, should put the issue to the people to be decided by them? It was true, that the right hon. Baronet, after his defeats in 1835 retired from office, being, as he (Viscount Morpeth) perfectly admitted, in full possession at that time, of the confidence of the Crown, without resorting to a dissolution, but it is well known that he had resorted to that expedient only a short time before, and that that dissolution had taken place upon the precise issue, whether the people were ready to commit the Government of the country to the right hon. Baronet and his friends around him. And when, upon the House having assembled, it was found that they had virtually decided against the retention of office by the right hon. Baronet, he then, as was cordially admitted at the time, by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, acted in the spirit of the constitution, and tendered his resignation, finding that he was in a permanent minority. If after this appeal to the people, the Government should find themselves in a minority in the new Parliament, which should be called together expressly selected by the country in reference to these measures, they would then, he admitted, be liable to reproach, but then, and then only, and then, for the first time, if, on finding themselves in a minority after such a demonstration on the part of the people of their feelings, they hesitated for one moment, in relinquishing the Government. But the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, had said, that they had shown no sign of any intention of dissolving; that all that was known was, that after sustaining a very decisive defeat in that House, they appeared again in their places, and made an announcement as if they proposed to go on with the Parliamentary business which had been already brought forward. He thought, that it must be obvious to every one, that the position of the current supplies of the year did not admit of an immediate dissolution, and if the Government had come down and said, that for the adverse vote which Parliament had given against them, they were about to punish Parliament by an immediate dissolution, he thought, that he could well imagine the outcry which would have arisen, and he could well understand, that they might then have been told with more

show of justice than appeared in this resolution, that they were acting in opposition to the spirit of the constitution. But he thought, that to any fair and candid mind, the announcement of the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that he would immediately move for the annual sugar duties, and that the Poor-law Bill, and other measures which were of the greatest importance would be postponed, made it pretty evident what was the intention of the Government. Great stress had been laid by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, and others, on the statement of the intention of the Government to enter into the question of the Corn-laws. On this point he would only remark, that after the great weight which, on both sides of the House, and from all parts of the country, had been attached to this subject, when it had been looked on as forming the main and essential ingredient in their scheme, he did not think that it was unreasonable to expect, that before the Session of Parliament closed, and before hon. Members returned to their constituents, who were about to be consulted upon this very point, the sooner an opportunity could be given on which a regular discussion might be entered into, and on which hon. Gentlemen could declare and manifest their opinions upon a matter at all times of the most momentous importance to all the interests of the country, and at this moment having the closest bearing on the state of parties and of the community, the better. While he was upon the subject of dissolution—while he was on the subject of the consideration whether the Ministers of the Crown were in a situation to make an appeal to the people, he must say, that independently of such views as he had suggested, the hon. Member for North Shields (Mr. Ingham) had afforded strong motives to a Government in such a position as that in which the existing Ministry stood, to resort to such a course, because he said, that probably a great number of those Gentlemen, who should be returned to sit in that House would devote themselves calmly and deliberately to the subjects under discussion. He sincerely hoped, that the hon. Gentleman was right in his anticipations, and he did not think, that if such an alteration should take place, the change would be for the worse, because whatever the good qualities of the present Parliament might be, he must say he did not think, that any very

high eulogium could be passed upon it for its freedom from the influence of party feelings. He had treated the question thus far upon the view of the case as connected with the spirit of the constitution, because, it was in this view, that it had been mainly presented to the House by the right hon. Baronet. But he would, before he concluded his observations, very shortly address himself to that which he thought was in fact the real meaning, and which must be meant to be the practical result of the resolution. That resolution must inform the country, and must speak the sense of the House authoritatively that the confidence of the present House of Commons was no longer given to the present Government. Now, whatever might be the vote to which the House should come, and submitting, as he should, with deference to its high decision, he certainly should await, with anxiety, of course, but with calmness, he hoped, the answer which they should receive, at the bar of public opinion. What had been the immediate cause of dispute and conflict lately within those walls? The noble Lord had reproached the Government with the time at which they had brought forward its measures. The time seemed to him naturally prescribed by the deficiency in the public income of the country. But it might be said, that the Government was responsible for the deficiency. They told them, that the foreign expenditure and negotiations which had led to the increase in the public service of this country were, of course, referable to the agency and instrumentality of the present Government. Yet the hon. Gentlemen opposite, notwithstanding that at that time no extraordinary necessity had arisen for an increased expenditure, were night after night calling on the Government to increase the establishments, for that while France and Russia had such navies, England ought not to be deficient. The deficiency, however, did exist, and must be dealt with; and the course of the Government had been, not to propose the temporary make-shift of a loan in time of peace, not as they had done in the first instance last year, to impose fresh burdens on the straitened means and struggling industry of the country, but to propose to recruit the public coffers by the same means whereby they also hoped to remove the shackles which had so long cramped the energy of the commerce of the coun-

try, to relax those restrictions which had so long pressed upon the springs of industry, and to increase the command of the people—the people, whom he hoped the House would not be induced to look upon as being so callous, or so ignorant, as to be actuated by animal impulses only, according to the description of the hon. Member for Pontefract—to increase the command of the people over the necessities and comforts of life. This had been their scheme of policy, their precise, plain, defined, avowed scheme of policy. What was the scheme of the right hon. Baronet and his supporters? It did not appear to him that any more light had been thrown upon that scheme in the course of this debate than in the last. Indeed, when the right hon. Baronet seemed disposed to treat the House to a display of peculiar frankness, they always appeared to be left more in the dark than ever. The position was this; a deficiency existed, aggravated by great distress, and the difficulty must be met by those who pretended to rule the destinies of the country. What, then, was the remedy of the right hon. Baronet? That he would not in the course of the next year consent to the introduction of foreign sugars—that he would not touch the timber duties till better acquainted with the despatches of the Governor-general of the Canadas—and that he would adhere eternally to the sliding scale of duties on corn.

*"Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum."*

This was the first time that any great party intent to seize the reins of power, instead of any clear principles or defined measures, or any ascertained purpose, had rested, as its mainstay, on the persevering lubricity of its leader. He had thus far confined himself to what was the immediate and actual cause of the dispute between the two parties, and the two kinds of policies that were now making their appeal to Parliament and the public; but, at the same time, he begged to say, that there was no part whatever of the general policy of the Government, as it bore either on the internal affairs of the country, or in reference to the world at large, on which he should shrink from the faintest discussion. As regarded the dependencies of the empire, his noble Friend the Secretary for the Colonies, might point to the great experiment now in a course of trial in Canada, by which that

noble province was entering on a new career under an united Legislature, its internal differences healed, its large external frontier respected, and its connection with this country more firmly knit than ever. He might point to the ancient seats of slavery in the colonies of Britain, and show them that state of tranquility and prosperity which alleged as the most criminal charge against them that they ran the least risk of disturbing. He might point to the island districts of the southern seas, and show them every day teeming with new evidences of the spread of civilization, liberty and order. He (Viscount Morpeth) might then turn to his noble Friend the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, to whose able administration of the foreign relations of the country such well-merited testimony had been borne; he might point to the various successes which had attended his policy—to the additional respect which followed the British flag in all those portions of the globe where it had already been known, and also in others, where until now it had been never planted; and he might also add, that during the whole of the time in which those operations were going on, the peace of Europe, though seriously menaced, had remained unbroken. If he turned to contemplate the internal state of the country, he could not but remember that the attestation borne on a recent occasion and from the least suspicious quarters, to the total cessation of insurrection and seditious movements. As to Ireland, that was a topic on which he would not enlarge, because perhaps it was a subject on which he might naturally be supposed to feel the strongest temptation to do so. But while he would not conceal and should always deplore that crimes did still occur in that country, of the most heinous nature, chiefly arising out of disputes as to the tenure of property in land, yet the march of improvement with respect to the complete internal tranquillity of the country, the cessation of frays and tumults, the improved habits of order, industry, and, above all of sobriety, had been most conspicuous and encouraging. Such was the state of things in which the House was called upon to transfer to other hands the care of the national and imperial administration. "Sir," continued the noble Lord, "power may pass from our hands. If it should do so, I say from my heart, may it prosper in yours; and may it at least be our

best boast and compensation that we have pioneered the way to more matured advances and more extended triumphs." As with regard to the intentions of the administration, I know no reason to be ashamed, so also with regard to the results of our measures I see no reason to be unthankful; and it is with this feeling that I hope that every one of those who have hitherto accompanied, supported, and maintained us in our efforts, will give to the censure contained in the resolution proposed by the right hon. Baronet their most decided negative.

Sir James Graham—Mr. Speaker, I trust I may be permitted to congratulate the noble Lord (Lord Morpeth), the Secretary for Ireland, upon the self-complacency with which he regards the probable fate of the Government, which, he has been pleased to admit, may be considered at the last extremity. The noble Lord has said, that power may pass from their hands; our allegation is, that power has long since passed from them. The noble Lord has also been kind enough to express a hope that power may prosper in our hands; and, in spite of the self-gratulations with which he concluded his speech, I believe that, if he be just and generous he must think, as the country also thinks, that there are omens which indicate that power may safely be intrusted to our hands. If I mistake not, the noble Lord congratulated the House on the tranquillity and growing prosperity and happiness of our colonial possessions, I conclude that the noble Lord, when he speaks of our colonies, could not have forgotten Jamaica, the principal colony of Great Britain; and I am certain, he must remember, and will have the justice to admit, that the policy which the Government intended to pursue with respect to Jamaica, two years ago, was defeated by the Gentlemen who sit on this side of the House; that the policy adopted was that recommended by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth; and that the tranquillity, happiness, and prosperity of Jamaica are attributable to the measures carried, in contravention of those proposed by her Majesty's Ministers, at the dictation of their opponents. I confess, I know not the meaning of the note of triumph which the noble Lord has sounded with respect to the foreign relations of the country. What for instance, does the noble Lord think of the state of our rela-

tions with China? I have yet to learn, that our success in that quarter of the world has been signal. It is our misfortune to know little of the details of the proceedings which have taken place there, or, indeed, with respect to any of our foreign relations. We have been all along kept completely in the dark with respect to our foreign policy, until about two or three weeks ago, when the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs favoured the House with the Blue Book which lies upon the Table. and which relates to the Eastern question. Still, I must say, I have yet to learn what, as regards China, is the brilliant success on which her Majesty's Government plume themselves. Is it to be found in the unbridled licence of our troops in the attack on the undefended city of Chusan, which has exalted the British name, already immortalized in those seas by our smuggling of opium? Is it to be found in the success which has attended our negotiations at Peking, where the British Admiral, after demanding money for a national insult, has been satisfied with receiving vague assurances, and has withdrawn the vast naval force under his command to the extremity of the empire, in the hope, I presume of obtaining there the terms which he failed to command at the capital? Is it to be found in the happy result of the subsequent negotiations, from which it appears, that the British resident, who was for years left without instructions, having at length acted on instructions which he did receive, has been recalled, and his acts disavowed by the Government? In a word, until I see the debt due by the Government to the East-India company, for the China expedition, paid—until I know that the two millions of pounds, which were surrendered to the Chinese government, have been repaid by that Government—until I know that the assurances given by the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies, as to the objects of the expedition, have been realised, and that indemnity for the past and security for the future have been obtained by some new expedition to be framed and sent out, I shall retain the opinion which I have already ventured to express, that a war with China is a great calamity. I believe it is the recorded opinion of Napoleon, that the man who should involve this country in a war with China, would prove to be the greatest enemy of England; that it was a war in which success could not be

hoped for, but from which fatal effects to our Indian empire might be anticipated. I therefore, retain the opinion I formerly expressed on this subject; and I think the war in which we have embarked with China is one in which success will not be attended with glory; but in which failure will prove the heaviest misfortune that ever has befallen this country. I have been led into these remarks by the conclusion of the speech of the noble Lord; but I will now endeavour to apply myself to those topics which are more immediately the subject for our consideration. The noble Lord said, at the commencement of his speech, that he would put out of view all the defeats which the Government had sustained previously to the Budget. That may be a very convenient course for the noble Lord to pursue; but it is one in which it is impossible for me, in justice to the motion before the House, to concur. The noble Lord's proceeding reminds me of the course pursued by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary at War (Mr. Macauley). The right hon. Gentleman justly observed, that the motion before the House may be divided into two propositions, the first of which, is the assertion of a fact, and the second, an inference founded on that statement of fact. The right hon. Gentleman, however, in arguing the question, found it convenient to invert the natural order of the propositions. He dealt first with the second proposition—the inference—and alleged his surprise that my right hon. Friend should have launched a general proposition of universal application. Now, that is far from being a just description of the second branch of my right hon. Friend's motion. It is a deduction drawn from a statement of a case, special in itself, and it is strictly defined and limited, according to the fact alleged in the major proposition. It is not alleged that, in the event of sustaining a single insulated defeat, it becomes the duty of any Government immediately to resign; the allegation of fact is, that her Majesty's present advisers have failed to possess sufficiently the confidence of the House to carry, not one or two, but a succession of measures, which they have deemed indispensable for the safety and good of the country. The right hon. Gentleman, in arguing the matter from analogy, took cases of single insulated defeats, sustained by Governments during a long train of administration of affairs; such, for instance,

as occurred to Mr. Pitt upon his Fortification resolution, to Lord Liverpool upon the Property Tax, and to Lord Sunderland on the Peage Limitation bill; but those, as I before remarked, were rare, occasional defeats, happening to Governments possessing the confidence of both Houses of Parliament, and able generally to carry the measures which they deemed conducive to the public welfare. I entreat the House to contrast with such a state of things, the actual position of affairs with which we are now dealing. We allege, that her Majesty's advisers have been, in a Parliament of their own calling, from its commencement up to the moment at which I am now addressing you, compelled to submit to a series of defeats and compromises, arising from the conscious weakness of the Government—that they have been obliged either to drop their own measures, against their wish, or to alter them, in defiance of their solemnly-pledged opinion, for no other ostensible reason than the pressure of the party opposed to them. And, really, if I look back to the measures which the Government have carried in the present Parliament, I cannot mention one — no, not a single one—which has been passed without the concurrence of their political opponents. The right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, enumerated several measures, on which he plumed himself as proofs of the success of the legislative power of her Majesty's advisers. I will follow the right hon. Baronet's detail, and begin with the English Municipal Bill. That measure was introduced by the Government of Earl Grey. It was a measure to which I and my noble Friend, the Member for North Lancashire, before we left Earl Grey's Government, were parties. It was a measure which we warmly concurred in, and actively supported. I am not aware that the principle of the bill received any opposition, either from my right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth, or any other of the Gentlemen with whom I have the honour to act. On the second reading, my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, warmly espoused and supported its principle. It is evident that the right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, must have totally forgotten the history of the various measures which he referred to, because they do, in fact, sustain, with remarkable force, the major proposition for which we are con-

tending, namely, that Ministers do not possess sufficiently the confidence of the House to carry their own measures, and are, in consequence, driven to adopt the views of their opponents. The next measure referred to by the right hon. Baronet was the English Tithe bill. What was the origin of that measure? During the short time my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, was at the head of the Government in 1835, he introduced an English Tithe bill into this House. That bill was, in all essential particulars, the ground-work of the bill subsequently passed. [*No, No.*] I contend, most distinctly, that it was so. The measures, were identical in all essential particulars, save that, in the one first introduced, the commutation was voluntary; whilst in that introduced by the present Government commutation was rendered compulsory after the lapse of a certain interval. [*Hear, Hear from the Ministerial benches.*] Do you rejoice in that? Why, you made the alteration, if not at the suggestion, at least with the concurrence and support of your opponents. What was the next measure? The Irish Tithe bill. What was the origin of it? Who is the real author of that measure? I say, my noble Friend the Member for North Lancashire. He was the author of the Irish Tithe Commutation bill, although it was not his good fortune to introduce it. By whom was it first introduced? It was first introduced by the right hon. and gallant Member for Launceston (Sir Henry Hardinge), when Secretary for Ireland, under Sir Robert Peel's administration, in 1835. Then arose the memorable dispute about the diversion of ecclesiastical property to secular purposes; and on the motion for the committal of the bill, her Majesty's present advisers, being then in opposition, proposed and carried the celebrated appropriation clause. Now, is it really possible that the right hon. Baronet can claim any credit to Ministers for passing the Irish Tithe bill in its present shape? It is now what it was when introduced by Sir R. Peel's Government: it is not in the shape for which the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Control, contended so strenuously when he sat on the benches behind me. It is not in the state in which Lord Melbourne declared it must remain, on account of a pledge to which, he said, he was, as a man of honour, bound, and to which his public faith was plighted.

Subsequent considerations, no doubt of a patriotic nature—and of a public character induced his Lordship to forfeit his plighted faith and pledge of personal honour? and it does so happen that the Irish Tithe bill, after all the contests which have taken place respecting it, stands very nearly in the same form in which it was originally introduced by Sir R. Peel's Government. The next measure which the right hon. Baronet pointed to is that of the Rural Police, or Constabulary Act. It is not necessary to say more upon this subject than, in passing, to observe that this measure furnishes another proof that Ministers are compelled to come to this side of the House for their principles and examples; for, after all, the measure is mainly founded upon the principle and model of the Metropolitan police, founded by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth. Next comes the Penny Post—that is all your own. [Mr. Warburton: Hear, hear!] No one knows better the history of that measure than my hon. Friend, the Member for Bridport, who cheers me. It was a concession made by the Government in its weakness; and, more than that, I believe the Postmaster-general, who understood the matter well, warned Ministers of the fatal step they were taking. That officer had greater prudence than Ministers. He foresaw that the downfall of the Government was involved in the concession respecting the Post-office; and, if the truth were known, I have no doubt that since their budget has been scouted by the House of Commons, and the deficiency of the revenue has involved them in fatal financial difficulties, they now feel that the warning of the Postmaster-general was prophetic. I wish the Gentlemen joy of that measure. The next of the measures to which we have been referred is the Irish Municipal bill. [Mr. Hume: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member for Kilkenny cheers. Why, I thought he was not satisfied with that measure. That measure passed; and it is the only measure, in the present Parliament, which Ministers have forced without the full concurrence of their opponents. But were they able to force even that measure, without large concessions?—concessions which destroyed the very vitality of the bill in the eyes of the hon. Member for Kilkenny.—[Mr. Hume: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member assents. Now, I ask him whether he can conceive

a greater proof of the weakness, imbecility, and paralyzed impotence of a Government than that, having introduced a measure of this kind, professedly to give peace to the unhappy country to which it refers, they, under process of compulsion from their opponents, introduce into what is intended by them to be a peace-offering, which shall give contentment to the people, changes contrary to their own judgment—contrary to their own sense of what is right, which they believe are calculated to defeat the effect they anticipated from the measure, and to render it odious in the eyes of those on whom it is bestowed? Yet this is the fact! Of this measure—the only one which Ministers have passed against the will of their opponents—the principal provision, that establishing the elective franchise, was dictated by the opponents of her Majesty's Government, and adopted by them, contrary to their own declared opinions. Another measure mentioned by the right hon. Baronet is the English Chapter Bill; and that, also, by an odd coincidence, is the fruit of a commission appointed by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth. I will turn from those measures which the Government have passed, to those which they have brought forward and been unable to carry. The right hon. Baronet relied upon what he said they had done. I will just glance at the measures which they have introduced, and been compelled to abandon. At the period when Lord Melbourne's Government was formed, there was one subject which attracted the greatest attention amongst the English community—I allude to the question of Church Rates. In 1834, just before I quitted the Government of Earl Grey, Lord Althorp, on the part of that Government, introduced a measure on the subject of Church Rates. I never exactly understood why that measure was abandoned; but, that having happened, Lord Moneagle, then Mr. Spring Rice, with great pomp and circumstance, brought forward a measure which was to settle that much-disputed question. With a great parade of figures and important calculations, Lord Montague's plan was sent to a Committee up stairs. I have always understood that we have never had a report from that Committee up to this day. As soon as the much-vaunted calculations came to be examined, they were blown into air. The plan was a complete abortion; and, from



that day to this, no attempt has been made to settle the question of Church Rates ! The Ministerial measure was abandoned, as utterly hopeless, impracticable and incapable of execution. We then had the plan of Normal Schools, from which all religious instruction was to be excluded. We fought that plan successfully, and the normal schools without religion were also abandoned. We now come to Ireland. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, rejoiced in his administration of the affairs of that country. I happened to hear the noble Lord make a speech with more than his usual power, because it appeared to be delivered with more than ordinary sincerity, on the subject of Irish railroads. In that speech the noble Lord contended that a grant of public money for Irish railroads would be, in the highest degree, conducive to the prosperity of Ireland. He took the sense of the House on the question, and was supported by a majority, the precise number of which I do not recollect. We, on this side of the House, indicated our objection to the proposal, and, forthwith, it was abandoned.

" ——— constupuere animi tremor occupat artus."

Such was the awe in which Ministers stood of any opposition from this side of the House, upon matters which they opened to Parliament as essential to the interests of the country committed to their charge ! We merely indicated opposition, and from that day to this, we have heard no more on the subject. Now, with respect to another matter. My hon. Friend, the Member for Bridport, agrees with me in the opinion, that one great defect in the English registration system is the want of an appellate tribunal. There was something like an approximation between the two parties on that point. We all agreed as to the object to be attained, and some difficulties existed only as to the mode of giving effect to our wishes. The Government has not absolutely, possessed power sufficient to surmount even those minor difficulties. Year after year, a Registration bill has been laid on the Table of the House. It has gone as far as a second reading, but never farther. A scheme was proposed, to which we, on this side of the House felt insuperable objections, namely, that the choice of the appellate tribunal should be intrusted to the Speaker of the House of Commons for the time being. This great question ought to have been

decided against some time ago. If decided in the affirmative, it ought now to have been the law, but if decided otherwise, some other plan should have been substituted for it. Such, however, is the imbecility—such the want of power of Ministers, that on this important question with respect to which the opinions of the two parties approximate, the Government has been unable to hold the balance between them. I pass over many minor matters. Seven bills were laid upon the Table, a few years ago, by the Lord Advocate for Scotland; one of which, relating to fictitious votes, was founded on the report of a Committee of the House. These bills were read a second time, and then postponed. In 1839, they were again introduced, again read a second time, and again, as usual, postponed. They were not brought forward in 1840, but this Session they have again been laid on the Table of the House, and no progress has been made with any one of them. They are left to their fate—they have gone to "the tomb of all the Capulets," where, the right hon. Baronet the President of the Board of Control, says, that all the imposture of the anti-opium and anti-slavery cries lies buried. I will tell the right hon. Baronet, by the bye, since he alluded to the hustings, that it is likely he may hear of those cries again. Their departed spirit may re-appear, to "fright him from his propriety," even at Nottingham, where he was once so strong. I will just observe, with respect to the Irish Registration Bill, that this strong Government, which boasts of possessing the confidence of the country and of Parliament, having introduced a five pound franchise into that measure, did, afterwards in private, raise it to eight pounds, at the suggestion of one of their powerful supporters, the hon. Member for Shrewsbury. I will pass over many other proofs of the feebleness of the Government, and of the restraint under which they act, and will merely refer to another striking evidence of their apathy and weakness. When I was a Member of Earl Grey's Government, I was authorized to prepare a bill for the Regulation of Ecclesiastical Tribunals, in conformity with the report of the Ecclesiastical commission, of which the learned Judge of the Court of Admiralty was a Member. In 1834, the measure had proceeded a considerable length towards ma-

turity. In 1835, my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, who was then in office, having ascertained that I was authorized to prepare such a bill communicated with me on the subject. I informed him of what had passed, and I happened to know that, at the time he quitted office in 1835, he had a measure ready to present to Parliament on that subject. From that hour to this, although six years have elapsed, her Majesty's Government have never attempted to deal with the question. [Lord John Russell indicated his dissent from this statement.] The noble Lord implies that I am mistaken. There has been, he says, a bill presented on the subject. What has become of it? It has shared the fate of the Lord Advocate's bills, and gone to "the tomb of all the Capulets." Of that bill we have, as yet, had no fruits; and this furnishes an additional proof that Government do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House to carry measures which they think necessary. I am now about to comment on a measure which appears to me to afford at once a test of the legislative skill of the Government, and of their power to carry their intentions into effect. I allude to the Poor-law Amendment Bill. I was a party to the introduction of the New Poor-law. I attach the greatest importance to it: I think it a measure of primary importance. [Lord Howick: Hear, hear!] The noble Lord cheers me. I wish he would allow his vote to rest on the sense he dispassionately entertains of the conduct of the Government in the management of this important measure. If the noble Lord will promise me that his vote shall depend on his opinion of the conduct of Ministers on this subject, I never felt more confident of anything in my life than that he will vote with us on the present occasion. It will be recollected, that a very important part of the original enactments related to the duration of the commission. It was fixed at five years. The period expired about the year 1838. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, feeling all the difficulty of the subject, asked for the renewal of the commission for a year. This was granted. That period expired; and again the noble Lord asked for the renewal of the commission for another year. I do not in the least complain of the course which the noble Lord pursued on that occasion. I think it might have been prudent, in a matter on which

public feeling was so much excited, and concerning which, a parliamentary investigation had been instituted, to take time to consider what the amended measure should be. Well! At the commencement of the present Session, after nearly three years' deliberation, the noble Lord, as the representative of the Government in this House, brought forward the bill, which I now hold in my hand, as the result of the matured consideration of the Ministry. I must say, that if ever there were a measure which required great care in its preparation—caution in its introduction—decision in its management, when once introduced, and force sufficient on the part of the Government to carry it through—it was this very measure. The noble Lord seemed partly conscious of this necessity; for he brought the measure forward at the earliest period of the Session, with the intention, I presume, of carrying it through before Easter. I conceive, that in ordinary prudence, the principle which should have guided the formation of such a measure, would have been to have determined on making the *minimum* change of the existing law, which circumstances rendered necessary, and at the same time to have carefully introduced every mitigating regulation which experience had shown to be requisite. Was this the course pursued by the Government? I say their course was the precise converse of it. Their conduct in the matter appears to me, to have been framed on the principle of asking more than they knew Parliament would grant, in the hope of obtaining as much as they could get; and every mitigating circumstance—every thing which had been recommended by a committee of this House, over which the hon. Member for Peterborough presided, and on which I also had the honour to serve, was studiously overlooked. I will give the House some proofs of the strength of the Government, and also of their legislative skill, in their conduct with respect to this bill. The most important part of the measure was, that which projected the prolongation of the commission for ten years. [An hon. Member, *hear*:] The hon. Member cheers me, and therefore, I suppose he thinks that was a wise proposal. Will he give me his vote, if I show him that the Government wants power to give effect to that which he and they think right and necessary? Is it to be believed—or, rather if we had not seen it, could we

have credited it—that the Government, having upon due deliberation, proposed ten years as the period for the continuance of the commission, should, after the first discussion in this House, upon receiving an intimation from my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, that ten years was too long a period, and that five years should be substituted for it, have immediately without a division reduced the term by one half. Next in importance to the duration of the commission, was the clause for extending the power of issuing general orders. That power was alleged, and I think truly, to have been much abused. It has been used as a subterfuge; and what are really general orders, have been issued under the name of special orders, in almost every union in the country districts. The bill, as first introduced, allowed a greater latitude for issuing these orders, and, by one sweeping enactment, gave the effect of law to all passed orders, general as well as special, unless when excepted by some subsequent provisions of the bill. That was objected to, and the noble Lord immediately yielded the point. Then came a provision, giving power to dissolve unions with the consent of a majority of the guardians, it had previously required the consent of two-thirds. This was also objected to, and the noble Lord immediately either postponed the clause or withdrew it, I forget which. Another provision gave power to remove the infirm poor and lunatics to a great distance from their homes. This underwent only one partial discussion; and such was the feeling excited in the House and the country by the proposal, that the Government at once relinquished it. A similar fate awaited another indiscreet provision, on a subject which touched the feelings of the people—I allude to the burial of paupers. The clause I refer to was introduced most injudiciously. It provided, that there should be burial grounds attached to the workhouses, apart not only from the parishes of the paupers, but from consecrated edifices. The right hon. Member for Tamworth hinted his objection to this clause; and, at the first intimation of his dissent, Government yielded as usual. One of the mitigating recommendations of the committee, which ought to have been embodied in the bill, was, that widows with their families, whom they were bound to maintain, should not

be subjected to the workhouse test. No such humane provision is to be found in the bill. Much evil has been found to arise from the practice of being governed, in the selection of medical assistance, by the amount of remuneration required for it. The committee recommended, that this important department connected with the management of the poor should not be put up, as it were, to the lowest bidder. But the noble Lord, in his bill, has completely passed over this point. I must say, that a bill so negligently and inconsiderately prepared, on a subject which required the utmost caution and deliberation, I never before witnessed. The noble Lord withdrew provision after provision on the first hint of an objection. Others, when resisted, he was compelled to postpone, from the fear of being defeated; and, at last, he gladly availed himself of the present state of affairs to back out of the measure altogether. So much has the noble Lord damaged the measure by his conduct, that I think it is almost hopeless to expect, it can ever be brought to a successful issue. I am favourably inclined to many of the provisions of the bill; but I think, that the noble Lord has contrived, partly by his negligence, and partly by his impotence, to render the success of any similar measure hereafter extremely problematical. I now turn to another subject. I know not whether the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, who led the opposition to the motion last night, is in the House, but I cannot avoid making a few observations on what fell from him on that occasion. I understood the noble Lord to take peculiar credit to himself, for opposing the abandonment of the appropriation clause, and of the educational scheme of the Government. I confess this appeared to me a whimsical reason for placing confidence in Ministers. When he thought Ministers right, they were too feeble to give effect to their measures. The noble Lord went on to say, that as regarded the Corn-laws, he thought Ministers wrong, and yet, whimsically enough, that is his second reason for placing confidence in them. “But,” said the noble Lord, “my past experience of the utter weakness of the Government is such, that I am certain they will fail in their measure respecting the Corn-laws.” I find it difficult to understand the noble Lord’s conduct. An opportunity is offered him

to resist the progress of Ministers, in a course which he thinks dangerous, and he deliberately rejects it, and supports them in opposition to those who seek to disarm them of power. We have the admission of both the right hon. Gentlemen now sitting opposite to me, the President of the Board of Control, and the Secretary at War, that, in their opinion, the real ground of want of confidence in the Government, is narrowed to the Budget. The Ministers themselves declare this. The noble Lord who leads the opposition to our motion, votes against the sugar duties project, under the full impression of the truth of that declaration; and now he intends to vote against the motion, when it is expressly declared by Ministers themselves, that the vote of want of confidence, rests upon the Budget. We must recollect, too, that the other hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Handley), the President elect, as I understand, of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, told us, in a former debate, that, as far as he was concerned, the Corn-laws should never be brought forward as a Government measure. The Ministers declare, with an explicitness not quite parliamentary or constitutional, that they retain office only to advance the repeal of the Corn-laws, and, if necessary, to dissolve Parliament for the purpose of using all the influence of Government in promoting this their favourite object. Will the sincerity of those Gentlemen be quite apparent who profess to resist objects which they say they consider dangerous, and yet do their utmost to promote the chosen means of effecting those objects? I ask, with confidence, will Lincolnshire understand such conduct? Will their plain, honest constituents understand it? Will those "heavy" persons, the agricultural constituencies, to whom the right hon. Gentleman opposite alluded, be satisfied with such reasons? Is there common sense in it? not to use a harsher word. Really, is not the case analogous to this:—if I saw a madman in the street, armed with a dangerous weapon, attacking right and left every one within his reach, what would be thought of me, if I were silly enough to attempt to defend each individual as he was attacked in turn? Would I not be expected to rush at once on the maniac, wrest from him his weapon, strip him of his power of mischief, and place him in restraint? A

policeman who hesitated to do this would be dismissed with disgrace. We shall see how agricultural constituencies will treat conduct not less irrational and more suspicious? The discussion which has already taken place on this question will not be altogether fruitless. Some good has already arisen from it; we understand, much better than before, the ground on which matters stand. The hon. Member for Shields says, that the second branch of the motion is not true, if a dissolution be intended by Ministers. Now, I ask the hon. Member—I ask any man—whether, when my right hon. Friend gave notice of the motion, any conduct could be more ambiguous than that of the Government? The Chancellor of the Exchequer, fixed a day for considering the sugar duties; and the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, named a distant day for propounding the Government plan respecting the Corn-laws. [Hon. Members: "Not a distant day."] I say, a distant day, some day not specified after the Whitsuntide Holydays. What are we to think now? I declare that, after hearing the President of the Board of Control, and the Secretary at War, last night, I left the House in doubt as to what course Ministers intended to pursue. I inferred, from what the President of the Board of Control said, that if the motion should be carried, Ministers intended to resign. Now, thanks to the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, fresh light is thrown upon the subject. The period of resignation is to be postponed, until Ministers shall find themselves in a minority in a new Parliament; and then some hopes are held out by the noble Lord, that, in that case, they might perhaps feel it their duty to resign. I think, therefore, that, upon the whole, we have to-night arrived at a more clear understanding of what the purpose of the Government is. The noble Lord, if I mistake not, told us that Ministers do not intend to carry on, "for any extended period," the affairs of the country with the present Parliament. Not for any extended period! Is that satisfactory to the hon. Member for Shields? He stated that, unless security were given for an immediate dissolution, our proposition would be just and well-founded. I ask the hon. Member whether, with his acute mind, he can, as a man of integrity, stand up and say, he is satisfied that the course taken by the Government is clear and

free from suspicion. We have a notice on the book, placed there very lately, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that, on Wednesday next, he intends to proceed with the remaining supplies. The sugar duties, being sanctioned by our side of the House, will, as far as they go, make up the deficiency which the right hon. Gentleman anticipated under that head. But, with a gross deficiency of 2,400,000*l.* one might suppose that some vote of credit would be necessary before the prorogation of Parliament. The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, has been pleased to inform us, that there is on the statute-book a law which gives him power to deal with the funds in the savings' banks, by which means he can obtain a disposable revenue. The right hon. Gentleman, to be sure, admits that he thinks such a proceeding is unconstitutional; but, at the same time, with that honesty and frankness which characterise him, he tells us, that, while the law remains on the statute-book, he will feel himself at liberty to avail himself of it. Well, then, on Wednesday, Ministers pass the remaining supplies—the sugar duties are in progress; and they will make up a certain amount of the deficiency in the revenue. The Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us, that he has in his hands, by means of the savings' banks, the power of making up the remainder of the deficiency; and all that the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, tells us, is, that it is not the intention of the Government to administer the affairs of the country "for any extended period" by the aid of the present Parliament! Up to the present time, Ministers have had the ground clear; and now there is no security that the remaining business of the Session should not be gone through, and Parliament prorogued as usual. Indeed, the hon. Member for Rochester advised such a course, and he is the near relative of a Cabinet Minister, and may be presumed to cry on his confidence. There is no stability in anything connected with the Government. Last night two Cabinet Ministers addressed the House, one of whom pointed to resignation, and the other to immediate dissolution. To-day, it would seem, the matter has been reconsidered in the Cabinet; and now the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, tells us, that Ministers will not, "for any extended period," carry on

the Government with the present Parliament. What security have we that the Government will not keep back the dissolution until after the next registration, take this chance of agitation, and then, after all, if they should find themselves in a minority, in a parliament so doctored and managed, they hold out to us the hope that they may possibly resign. I ask the hon. Member for Shields, whether this is a state of things which he considers satisfactory? If the mystery which now prevails on the subject be not cleared up, I trust we shall have the hon. Member's vote. There are other topics on which I intended to touch, but I will abstain, and compress what I may yet say into the narrowest compass. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, attempted to repudiate the distinction between a Parliament which Government themselves have called, and a Parliament called by their opponents. The case of Mr. Pitt, in 1784, was that of a Parliament called by his political opponents, and, though he was outvoted on several motions, he sustained but one defeat on a measure of legislation. But Mr. Pitt possessed not only the confidence of the Crown, but of the other House of Parliament; and, beyond, that, he had a more confident expectation as to the effect of a dissolution than I have heard any of the Gentlemen opposite yet venture to express. The present House of Commons was called by her Majesty's present advisers; and, as was remarked by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, it is somewhat extraordinary, that whereas all former Ministers, when representation was only virtual, and not real, yielded to the express sense of the House of Commons, the Minister who now offers the most protracted and obdurate resistance to the declared opinion of the House, is the very Minister who put an end to virtual representation; and, by a measure of his own, constituted the House of Commons, as he once contended, and as I contend, the real representation and express image of the people. It is a most unfair and an unconstitutional exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, for a Government, after being signally defeated, as has been fully admitted by the three Cabinet Ministers who have spoken, not to take one or the other of these alternatives—either immediate resignation, or immediate dissolution. It was in the power of the Govern-

ment to have brought forward their measures at any time they pleased. The report of the Import Duties Committee was presented last Session, and they had all the recess to consider it in. A great portion of the deficiency of the revenue was known when Parliament met. The fair course, then, for them to have pursued, was to have launched their measures at the commencement of the Session. They might then have taken the sense of Parliament upon them; and, if defeated, and they did not choose to resign, they might have dissolved. They choose their own opportunity, and they studiously bring forward their propositions, when they know that there is a constitutional difficulty in the way of an immediate dissolution. It is a difficulty, however, of their own creating, and arises from the choice of time they made for submitting their propositions to the House. Ministers hold the power of dissolution in their hands, and I assert they make the most unconstitutional use of the prerogative. After their defeat, they not only come down to the House, and say, "Give us the sugar duties—give us the remainder of the supplies," but they also propose to discuss the question of the Corn-laws, the most exciting question that could be discussed in the presence of the community; and they further propose, that we should discuss it, under the threat of a dissolution. I contend, that when a Minister, after sustaining a series of defeats, continues in office, and so conducts himself, he wounds the honour of this House, he tarnishes its reputation, defies its power, and subverts the fundamental principle of representative Government. Certainly, among the changes and chances of political warfare, it is somewhat extraordinary to see the noble Lord and his Whig coadjutors sheltering themselves under the inapplicable precedent of Mr. Pitt. But they are not satisfied with that. Retained in power by royal favour, they crouch under the royal prerogative, and hope to prolong their miserable existence for a few months longer. Not content with the precedent of Mr. Pitt, the President of the Board of Control resorted to the authority of the arguments of Mr. Pitt. I think the right hon. Gentleman might be disposed to prefer the authority of Mr. Fox on this subject; but it does so happen, that whilst he shelters himself under the authority of Mr. Pitt, I adhere to the authority of Mr. Fox.

I am about to quote the opinion of that statesman, expressed in terms which, though stronger than I could wish to use, are, nevertheless, deserving serious consideration of the hon. Gentleman opposite. Mr. Fox said:—

"Though the popularity of the present Administration is not ascertained, yet I will not hesitate to affirm, that there is an intention in Ministers to establish themselves on a foundation unfriendly to the constitutional privileges of this House. They court the affection of the people, and on this foundation they wish to support themselves in opposition to the repeated resolutions of this House. Is not this declaring themselves independent of Parliament? Is not this separating the House of Commons from its constituents, annihilating our importance, and avowedly erecting a monarchy on the basis of an affected popularity, independent of and uncontrollable by Parliament? Such a scheme I can view under no other aspect but as a system of the basest tyranny, and calculated to accomplish the ruin of the liberties of the country. Such a system of despotism, is, indeed, the most likely to originate in men who carry on their schemes by the machinations of dark intrigue, of men who have stabbed the constitution, by means of a secret influence in one department of Government, and are now prepared to perpetrate similar assassinations, by methods of the basest corruption, in another. I hope, however, that Members will attend to these designs of Ministers, masked under the most dangerous and imposing appearances, and that they will rescue the country from the hands of those who are only distinguished by the dirtiness of their political intrigue, and their violations of the privileges of the House. I hope that such Ministers will finally see the danger of their situation, and that this House will no longer suffer itself to be insulted by its own moderation."

I vote for the resolution before the House, because, among many other reasons, I am anxious to have recorded in the journals of Parliament, the heavy weight of responsibility which her Majesty's advisers will encounter, if they counsel a dissolution under the present circumstances of this country. The space of time which will elapse from the present moment to the meeting of the new Parliament, will be to all intents and purposes, an interregnum; it ought not to be unnecessarily prolonged. Dissolution, if it take place at all, should take place immediately. I have stated to the House my reasons for thinking we have no security that it will immediately occur. And, if it should not, I am anxious that this resolution should be placed on the journals of

the House. I have said, that the honour and the dignity of the House will be wounded by the postponement of dissolution, and I hope, that in the new Parliament, their avengers will be found. I say, that Ministers, during the interregnum, cannot conduct the public affairs, except by expedients which a strong Government would despise, and of which a good Government would be ashamed. These Gentlemen are always asking us what we would do? I tell them I am no great admirer of the skill with which they play their game, though I must admit the sleight of hand with which they shuffle the cards. But if they cannot play their own hand, I do not see that they are entitled to look into ours. The dissolution of Parliament is undoubtedly the prerogative of the Crown; but the advice as to the exercise of that prerogative involves the responsibility of Ministers; and I contend, that a more dangerous—I had almost said, a more revolutionary—proceeding, than to advise a dissolution in the present juncture of affairs, after the course pursued by the Government, cannot be conceived by any rational mind. [Lord J. Russell: What do you say of 1831?] The noble Lord reminds me of 1831. I am glad of it. In that year Lord Grey's Government brought in the Reform Bill. They carried the second reading by a majority of one. Shortly after, they were defeated, on a matter of minor importance, upon the motion of General Gascoigne. What did they do? Did they threaten dissolution? Did they come down, and brandish in the face of the House the threat of a dissolution? The next morning, without the intervention of more than twelve hours from their defeat, Lord Grey's Government advised the Crown to exercise its prerogative, by dissolving Parliament. If the Crown had not taken that advice, we would not have remained the responsible advisers of the Crown for twelve hours longer. Parliament was dissolved instantly, and that is the precedent to which the noble Lord refers me! So much for the precedent which the noble Lord suggested. Now I will suggest a precedent to him. In the year 1807, Mr. Canning, in no ambiguous terms, announced to the House that a dissolution would immediately ensue. I suppose the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, still feels some respect for Mr. Tierney. He is a good constitutional authority at all events. Upon that an-

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nouncement being made by Mr. Canning, Mr. Tierney said—"As for a dissolution, I am convinced that it cannot be intended, particularly when I see that a religious clamour is raised, because the malice of the devil himself could not have thought of preparing for a dissolution by the wicked cry of the 'Church in danger.'" [*Cheers from the Ministerial benches.*] Do you cheer that? Do you believe that the cry of the Church in danger is more exciting, and more likely to madden the people, than the cry of "cheap bread" raised from the Treasury Bench? The Secretary at War asked, "Where is agitation—where are the signs of it?" and then, according to the usual practice with Gentlemen on the Treasury bench, he went further, and added, "Where is the harm of it?" The right hon. Gentleman, too, asked, what is its nature? I will tell him. With pain greater than I can describe—with astonishment which was perfectly boundless at the time, and which is not yet altogether removed—I heard the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, declare in his place last year, that in his opinion, no man who was not prepared to alter the Corn Laws could obey the divine injunction, and offer up with sincerity the daily prayer for daily bread. This is the nature of the agitation. But does it stop here? In a very eloquent and brilliant passage, composed not hastily or without consideration, the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, when announcing the schemes of Government, in the debate on the Sugar Duties, wound up his speech by declaring, that in his opinion the present Corn Laws were at variance with the beneficence of Providence. I am aware that many Gentlemen in this House entertain the same opinion. I believe them to form a minority—a considerable minority. But, be they a minority or a majority, I appeal to their dispassionate judgment, and ask, whether they think that such language, from such high places, addressed to the people on a topic most inflammatory, can fail to produce—as I say it is intended to produce—the greatest possible excitement? This is the most dangerous course a Government can possibly pursue, with reference to the most dangerous subject. Desperate tenants, under notice to quit, set fire to the premises which they are compelled to evacuate. Pirates, when they are no longer able to defend their vessel, rush with torches to the magazine.

We are told of the strong man in despair, who hit upon the stratagem of turning loose three hundred foxes, with firebrands at their tails, among the standing corn of the people. This is an exact representation of the Government, who, at a dissolution, will send forth their torches and their firebrands. After all, I am persuaded that the 8s. duty was an after-thought. The Secretary-at-War told us, with great frankness, that he always thought the propositions respecting timber and sugar might be carried; but the Corn Law proposition he knew to be a hopeless project, which could not be carried. In the absence of all authoritative assurance to the contrary, I shall always believe, and continue to assert, that the shilling a bushel duty on Wheat was never determined on by the Government, until after their defeats on the Irish Registration Bill. I say, this is a desperate plunge, made by desperate men. They have made up their minds to "put their lives upon a cast," and are determined to "stand the hazard of the die." It is against them. I cannot address the people of this country in the language of quotation used by the noble Lord:

"O passi graviora;"

for never was a country cursed with a worse, a more reckless, or a more dangerous Government. The noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, talks of "lubricity;" but, thank God, we have at last pinned you to something out of which you cannot wriggle—and as we have the melancholy satisfaction to know that there is an end to all things, so I can now say with the noble Lord,

"Dabit Deus his quoque finem."

Thank God, we have at last got rid of such a Government as this!

Debate adjourned.

House adjourned to June 2.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, June 2, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—*The Composition; Houses of Industry (Ireland)*.—Read a third time:—*Ordinance Survey; Militia Ballots Suspension*.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Thornely, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Somers, Mr. Kemble, Sir De Laey Evans, Mr. Clay, Mr. Attwood, Mr. Ewart, and several other hon. Members, from Staffordshire, Dudley, Devonport, Sligo, Cumberland, Chester, Arman, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Christopher, from places in Lincolnshire, by Lord G. Lennox, from places in Sussex, by Mr. Round, from places in Essex, by Sir J.

Y. Buller, from Devonshire, by the Earl of Hillsborough, from the county of Down, by Mr. C. Howard, from Cumberland, and by Mr. Heathcote, from Lincolnshire, against a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Captain A'Court, from Tamworth, and Sir J. Y. Buller, from Devonshire, to adopt Sir R. Peel's Motion.—By Sir H. Vivian, from a place in Devonshire, for a Reduction of the Import Duties on Corn, Timber, and Sugar.—By Sir Walter James, from Hull, for Church Extension; and from persons engaged in Trade, against the Alteration of the Duties on Corn, Timber, and Sugar.

NOTTINGHAM ELECTION.] Mr. Godson said, he held a petition in his hand from Mr. Edward Pillbean Cox, to which he requested the attention of the House, and which, if the statements of the petition were true, called aloud for the interference of the House. The petitioner, one of the freemen of Nottingham, stated, that he and others during the recent election, were supporters of the present hon. Member for that place, and that since that time attempts had been made to buy over himself and other parties to the other side, and for that purpose a meeting had been held by two persons who were named in the petition, and who requested the petitioner to receive a sum of money to the amount of 5*l.* at first, as part and parcel of the sum of 50*l.*, which the petitioner was to receive for the purpose of endeavouring to get over certain persons to the Whig party, to which proposition he would not consent. He would not read the whole of the petition to the House, but the leading statements. The petitioner was next requested to go out of the way for a short time, from which he also dissented. He was then requested by the two persons whose names were mentioned in the petition, and who stated, that a great change had taken place in the views of their employers, to go under a fictitious name either to Bassetlaw, Newark, or Walsall, for the purpose of bribing the electors of those places during the ensuing general elections, for which service the petitioner should have 50*l.*, and all his expenses paid at each of those places. The petitioner was informed at the same time, that their friends would so arrange matters with the returning officers, that the elections at Bassetlaw, Newark, and Walsall, should come off on different days. The petitioner then went on to state, that he received a portion of the money for the purpose of testing whether the parties were serious in making the offer, and went to London, directing that if anything more was to be done they should send him word to town. After his arrival in Lon-



don he received a letter enclosing a remittance of 20*l.*, to the following effect:—

"Dear Coxe, enclosed you will receive 20*l.* Not having received any supplies, I have forwarded this from my own private stock, and will forward the remaining 10*l.* in the course of a few days."

The letter added, that everything was going on as favourably as could be expected, considering the limited means at the disposal of the parties. The petitioner brought these allegations under the notice of the House for the sake of showing his fellow-countrymen the iniquitous system of bribery put in operation for the purpose of securing the return of Whig Members to the House of Commons, and to show also the necessity of providing some efficacious measure to prevent such practices, and to detect and punish those who might be guilty of them. The petitioner particularly called the attention of the House to the singular fact, that two persons, whom he named, should offer and supply large sums of money, having no means or resources of their own whence to furnish them, a fact clearly showing that they were the agents of other more opulent parties, who were desirous of securing by bribery the return of Members for four different places. The petitioner humbly prayed that he might be permitted to prove at the Bar of the House the allegations which he made in his petition, and which he could establish beyond all contradiction, and that the House would institute a full, a fair, and an impartial inquiry into all the facts of the transactions to which he had ventured to direct the attention of the House, and adopt such measures as might be deemed expedient. The hon. Gentleman then moved, that the petition of Mr. Coxe be printed, and taken into consideration on Thursday, the 10th of June instant.

Ordered.

#### HERTFORD—REGISTER OF VOTERS.]

Mr. F. Duncombe said, he wished to call the attention of the House to the non-compliance with one of its orders, namely, an order made by the House on the 20th of May last. This was a matter of some importance, as it had reference to the law which regulated the representation of the country. Upon the 20th of last May, upon the hearing of a petition, this House came to a resolution, and an order was thereupon made to the effect, that the

clerk of the peace of the county of Hertford should furnish and forthwith lay before the House a copy of the list of voters for the county of Hertford, from the registry book of the county, for the years 1840 and 1841. The motion which the hon. Member had made upon that occasion, was seconded by the noble Lord, one of the Members for that county. Upon that order being made, the clerk of the House wrote to the clerk of the peace for the county of Hertford, intimating to him, that he should forthwith furnish the desired return to the House. The clerk of the peace wrote back to say, that it was not his duty to furnish the return, but that it was the duty of the sheriff of the county, in whose custody the registry book was. The clerk of the House, immediately upon this, wrote to the sheriff of the county, desiring him forthwith to supply the House with the return required. A fortnight had now elapsed, and the sheriff had not as yet furnished the House with the return; but he should state to the House, that the sheriff had written a letter, dated 29th May, which, with their permission, he would read to the House, in which he assigned his reasons for not having as yet laid the return before the House. The hon. Member then read the sheriff's letter, wherein he stated, that the registry book of the voters of the county was in his custody, that it was a very large book, containing 15,800 pages, and that the copying it, at the rate of 6*d.* per folio, would amount to the sum of 37*l.* 19*s.*, beside the expense of the paper, and that it would take from three weeks to a month to have it copied, and that only one person could take a copy at a time. The sheriff, under these circumstances, begged to be informed at whose expense it was that the copies were to be furnished, and whether he was to be put to so great an expense. The hon. Member, under this state of circumstances, wished to know from the House what was to be done? A fortnight had already expired, and yet there was no return, as ordered, made to the House. He begged the House would order the sheriff forthwith to furnish a copy of the registry. Upon referring to the Reform Act he found that the clerk of the peace or other returning officer was required to cause to be printed or written, copies of the list of voters upon the registry, and to furnish the same to any person applying for them,

upon demanding and being paid a reasonable fee or charge. The hon. Member, in conclusion, said, that he hoped the House would see that its orders were obeyed.

Mr. *Estcourt* said, it appeared to him, that there was some misconception here as to which officer should furnish the House with the return in question—whether it was to be the clerk of the peace or the sheriff? The House had always held, that when an order was made upon a public officer, that order should be complied with without hesitation. By the act of the 2nd of William 4th, cap. 5, it was expressly stated in one of its clauses, that the clerk of the peace should cause copies of the registry to be printed or written for the use of the electors, and that every clerk of the peace and every returning officer should deliver to every person applying for a copy of the same such copy or copies at a reasonable charge. Now, it appeared, it was supposed that this clause did not sufficiently provide for the expenses which might be incurred by the proper officers in furnishing the copies of the registry; but if that clause had not done so, the next clause had, for it was therein stated that any expenses incurred in making out the copies of the registry, whether written or printed, or any other expenses incurred in carrying out the objects of that act, should be defrayed out of the treasury of such county. The magistrates of the county ought, therefore, to be applied to for an order on the county treasurer for the payment of such additional expense.

Mr. *Alston* said, that the question was, how the expenses of making out the return were to be paid? He conceived that the expenses should be paid by the clerk of the peace in the first instance, and the magistrates were bound to give an order on the county treasury for the expenses incurred in publishing these lists. He would take an early opportunity of explaining this to the magistrates of the county. The House was not aware how difficult it was to get a body of magistrates together until the quarter sessions commenced. He hoped the House would now give a direct, specific, and imperative order that the return of the list of electors of the county of Hertford, for the years 1840 and 1841, should be forthwith delivered.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* said, it was per-

fectly clear that the duty in the first place was imposed upon the clerk of the peace, and that he must perform that duty, and that he must incur the expenses of it. If not paid by an order from the magistrates upon the treasury of the county, the Court of Queen's Bench, upon an application to it, would grant a *mandamus* directed to the magistrates to compel the payment of such expenses. The first person who was bound under the act to furnish copies of the lists of voters was the clerk of the peace, and it was his duty to obey the order of the House.

Sir *E. Sugden* said, that, according to the provisions of the Act of Parliament, the sheriff had nothing whatever to do with the matter. It was undoubtedly the duty of the clerk of the peace to take care that the lists should be forthcoming; but it appeared that the provisions of the act did not apply to the case.

Mr. *Duncombe* then moved, that the clerk of the peace for the county of Hertford, be called to the bar of the House on Monday next, unless the register be furnished to the House in the mean time.

Dr. *Lushington* said, he would not have risen if it had not been for an observation which had fallen from his hon. Friend (Sir *E. Sugden*), who had not expressed himself with his usual perspicuity. He contended that when a return was ordered by that House, if addressed to a public officer, it was his bounden duty to make the return instant; he had no right to make frivolous excuses.

Sir *E. Sugden* said, that the hon. Gentleman had entirely misunderstood him. What he had stated was, that there were provisions in the Act of Parliament which provided for the payment, but that those provisions did not meet this particular case.

Motion agreed to.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE (No. 1.) BILL.] Mr. *Aglionby* begged to ask, whether it was the intention of her Majesty's Ministers to carry through the House during the present Session, a measure respecting which there was a great deal of anxiety out of doors—he meant the Administration of Justice (No. 1.) Bill?

The Attorney-General could assure the hon. Member that it was the wish and the intention of the Government to carry the measure through during the present Ses-

sion. The delay had arisen from an obstacle interposed by his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon, respecting the Accountant-general; but he hoped to see it pass through the House very shortly.

CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTRY—  
ADJOURNED DEBATE — (THIRD DAY.)]  
The order of the day for resuming the adjourned debate having been read,

Mr. Sergeant *Talfourd* spoke as follows\*: Mr. Speaker, If when the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, closed his speech and the debate on Friday, I regarded with surprise the indications of the spirit which inspired it, I own that it appears yet more remarkable when surveyed in the cool light of reflection. From the first sentence, in which he offered his ironical congratulations to the noble Secretary for Ireland, on the "complacent tone in which he had spoken of the Acts of a Government in its last extremity"—as if even the satisfaction of a moment were an intolerable offence—through all its varieties of invective, down to its close, where piety came to the aid of failing language, and he blessed God for the approaching downfall of his sometime comrades, it presents a specimen of curious animosity, which I believe is without example, and I hope will be without copy in the annals of political warfare. Fortunately for those who are the objects of such attacks, there is a tendency in all violent emotions to overleap their objects—the certainty of the aim is not in proportion to the eagerness of the marksman; and the spring which is animated by the most fiery venom sometimes carries the deadly stroke beyond its intended victim. Such I hope to show is the result of the attack which the once Lord of the Admiralty, has made on those who shared with him in the excitements, in the dangers, in the agitations, and in the triumphs, of far more critical times than those which now await us. The substance of his charge—amidst the imagery of desperate pirates, of incendiary tenants, and of burning brands—is, that the Ministers have carried the principle measures in which they have succeeded, by the concurrence of their political opponents, and that they have failed to carry other measures when they have wanted that aid.

\* From a corrected report published by Moxon.

To obtain "ample room and verge enough" to trace the characters in which he would write his accusations of successes obtained by too great concurrence of opinion, and failures not produced by want of merit, but by deficiency of strength, the right hon. Baronet complains, that the noble Secretary for Ireland, has sought to limit the question to the exposition of the budget, and has claimed to himself the right of finding matter for his changes in former years. I will not deny that right; but I, in my turn, must request the right hon. Baronet to carry his retrospective review a little further, and take one glance at earlier days, when he shared in struggles which he has not forgotten, because assuredly he has not forgiven. Many of the hon. Members who now encircle him may be justified in looking back, with a fond regret, at those buttresses of Ministerial strength which were destroyed in 1832; may yet entertain some busy, though indistinct hope, that the seasons of Tory domination, which they so long sustained, may return; may regard those as the palmy days of administrations, when taxation, coercion, and war, were extended by mighty majorities—when paper credit was maintained by frequent and bloody execution—when the sanctities of private life were beset by spies and violated by domestic treason—and when the expression of public opinion only gave to the Government a sterner aspect; impelled it to new severities; and excused it in fresh inroads on the remains of freedom. But the right hon. Baronet can scarcely believe this grim front of authority to have been desirable then, or to be possible now:—he was associated with those followers of Mr. Fox, whose name he has ventured to introduce, and who, I think, would look with astonishment on the position in which he stands, and, though in his benignity he would not call him "a recreant Whig," would regard him with sorrow rather than anger. In that school, where the hopes of humanity were entrusted to small minorities, he might have learned to feel that night is not always right; that truth is not always with numbers; and that the wisdom of true statesmanship may be embodied in efforts which only generations unborn shall fully recognise. When the tremendous force of public opinion broke down those awful barriers—when the agitation in which the then Lord of the Admiralty was a leader was triumphant—when the

pillared rottenness of ancient corruption lay prostrate before him and his colleagues—the great practical question arose, whether the renovated and purified Constitution should be administered by those who had struggled in that work of majestic regeneration, or by those who had opposed it—by those whose fondest hopes attended its prosperity, or those whose honest fears still prophesied its ruin. Happily, as I think, the authors of the Reform Bill became its guardians; but it was no easy task for those who, resting from organic change, desired fairly to apply and liberally to construe its blessings, to maintain, in the calm of victory, the position they had acquired during the passion of the struggle. Not to dwell on the absence of those palpable appliances of which their success had deprived all Governments for all time—which has been repeatedly adverted to in this debate, and is too obvious to be dwelt on—they stood in a glorious but anxious position, between their discomfited opponents and their too sanguine allies. They found themselves, then, on the table-land they had achieved—desirous of consolidating and sustaining the advantages they had gained, but contented there—between two parties, one of whom hated their success, while the other was jealous of their pause;—and could they expect that, in the maintenance of the fruits of their victory, they should either succeed to the majorities of their predecessors or maintain that impulse which had been great in action? In this position they have felt that the elements of power itself were changed—that it must seek new sources of strength from a wider sphere—and finding those elements not in one party but in each, they must avail themselves of them in support of the measures which not one party alone would support, but to which each might by turns contribute its honest sanction. If this appeal for support, not to persons alone but also to principles, is dishonourable, it follows, that the powers of the State can never be justly administered except by an extreme party; and the right hon. Member for Tamworth will find as little consolation in that doctrine as the Ministers whom he now seeks to displace. Between the claims of Chartism on the one hand, and those of the Toryism of deepest Orange hue on the other, are immovable gradations: and the Ministry which now would take any course but the wildest,

must often appeal to elements to be found in those who differ in some points with themselves. If, indeed, the view which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, seems to adopt of a statesman's duties be just—if the simile in which, among the toys and fantasies of his passion, he likens the position of adverse parties to gamblers, where one party may shuffle, and cut, and deal, and the other hide their cards, justly explains it—if the game of politics is animated by no nobler inspiration than personal spite, and addressed to no greater rewards than the emoluments of office, if principles are only the counters with which the gamblers play; then it is correct to assume that these principles are property for the purpose of the ignoble contest; that all Conservatism belongs to one side of the Table, and all Progression to the other. But if Statesmanship is a nobler game, I see no just cause of complaint against the Minister who introduces measures, which he knows that even his opponent will recognise as just and wise, and who relies on their honesty to support him. The hon. Baronet may call this weakness—I call it wisdom. His party feeling may be so intense, that he may think it objection enough to any measure, that it will be cursed with the approval of his opponents; but in this his feeling cannot be shared by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth. Yet even he has taunted the Ministers with the support he gave them on the Privilege question, and on the Chartist petition of the other night, as if they had not a right to expect his support on those questions—as if he could have done otherwise than support them without forfeiting his high character, even in his own esteem; and, in truth, his ground of want of confidence, because his support has been required and given, amounts to this complaint, that on many occasions they have agreed with him. If he should succeed to office, let him be assured he will very soon require—and I trust he will receive—when he seeks to restrain his Orange allies, or his Chartist opponents—the same support which he has so frankly given to the Ministers; and of which, I trust they will not so often remind him. I, therefore, translate the censure—that the Ministers have passed no great measure without the support of their political opponents—to mean no other than that their great measures have been such as to

secure the approval of the wisest and the best, and that some of them are so good, that even the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, claims them for his own. But the right hon. Baronet further accuses Ministers, that, besides committing the crime of passing measures so good that even he concurs in their adoption, they have proposed others which he and his friends have opposed, and which thus opposed the Ministry have been unable to carry; and he first instances the attempt to settle the question of Church Rates. Now, if the old lesson is to be read backwards—if to command success is nobler than to deserve it—I grant they are liable to the right hon. Baronet's censure. But their position, in relation to this question, is precisely that which I would instance as exemplifying the difficulties of a Ministry, who, anxious to preserve the principle on which the noblest institutions of the country rest, are yet desirous of preventing that principle from being exercised to the vexation of those who conscientiously differ from its application. If they had been studious only of acquiring popularity from the great body of Dissenters who take an interest in political affairs, they would have adopted their doctrine—that those who do not desire to attend the services of the Church ought to be exempted from the duty of contributing to the repairs of its fabrics—but they have not done so; they have attempted to reconcile the great doctrine, that the first and most sacred duty of the State is to provide for the religious instruction of all her people, with the removal of those obstacles which render the execution of the laws always vexatious, often difficult, sometimes impossible. Believing that the Church of England exists, not only for the blessing of those who resort to her services, but of all who desire to see religion and piety established on sure foundations; admitting that her fabrics scattered through the land do not, as they point to heaven “with silent finger,” bear with them only the aspirations of those who worship within them, but of all those whose thoughts rise from earth heavenwards; admitting that it is just that a national charge should arise out of a national duty, I yet think that the effort to extend her foundations by a wider charity was worthy of those, who, by the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, had admitted the Protestant Dissenters to civil

rights. True, it has failed, but strange as it may seem to the right hon. Baronet, I believe that one generous attempt to break down the bonds which sever the brotherhood of mankind—nay, one earnest hope for the perfect union of those who are “made of one blood”—is better, is nobler, is more efficacious, and exerts a wider influence, even in its failure, than the most energetic expressions of hatred, or the most vigorous acts of coercion. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, having taken occasion to taunt the right hon. President of the Board of Control, with an imaginary failure at the hustings of Nottingham—forbearance from which he might have learned in his own journey from Cumberland to Pembroke—with a courage which I cannot sufficiently admire, adverted to a subject which the Member for Tamworth with wiser caution omitted—and breathed that name of Ireland, which if whispered in the ear of his illustrious leader, when he shall ascend the triumphal chariot of administration amidst the cheers of his friends, shall send such chilliness to his hopes as the warnings of mortality, by the monitory slave, shed into the soul of the Roman Conqueror. He taunted us with the failure of our efforts to do justice to Ireland. I admit we have failed—not in applying such consolation to that afflicted country as our adversaries have permitted us to employ—not in our endeavour to curb the pride of her oppressors; to administer the laws with equal justice; to make emancipation a living truth instead of an empty boast; but we have failed in our hope to give to her that just equality of political rights with ours, which nature entitles her to claim, and both charity and wisdom enjoin us to yield. But which think you will she prefer? The vain hope, the futile wish, and unsuccessful struggle to save her, or the power that shall crush her affections and turn her hopes into despair? Ireland is ready with her answer! Ages of oppression have quickened her sensibilities, and she hails the expression of kindness as an unwonted, but most welcome, boon. Next, the right hon. Baronet refers to the Poor-law Amendment Bill, which to me, if not the unkindest, is the most astonishing cut of all. Here is an Act which he himself has assisted to introduce; which he has seen renewed from the pressure of these party debates without objection; which, as far as I know, he has never assisted to improve;

and which he seizes with eager hand to hurl against those who have been associated with his noblest friends in sustaining it against long popular censure. Why? O, it is too fearful a weapon—it is envenomed too deeply with the hatred of class against class to be rejected at such a season. And on what right does he who helped to fashion now claim thus to use it? He says it does not contain suggested ameliorations—has he sought to apply them? He complains especially that it does not provide for the medical relief of the sick, or prohibit the odious system of advertisements for tender. Where is the clause placed or the votes to be moved by him, to remedy this evil? The Government have considered it—they have not decided upon it—clauses have been framed to meet it after great care and consideration. I have placed them on the votes, and they would have been debated but for those party strifes which seem inevitable while the balance of parties is so equally poised in this House. For three years I have been in correspondence with the Provincial Medical Association on this subject: and, strange to say, I was never made aware till Friday, that our cause had so distinguished a well-wisher as the right hon. Baronet. I know not whether the Member for Finsbury, who is connected with the other great organ of the medical body, the London Medical Association, has been more fortunate; but I rather think that he is equally surprised with me at the hidden virtue which the warmth of the debate has quickened into life. Good things as well as evil may thus be developed:—"it is the bright day which brings forth the adder;" and on the other hand, it is the enthusiasm of a feeling which is not love which has prompted into day our unknown and hitherto unsuspected friend. For one measure the hon. Baronet does give us credit; he says; "The Post-office is all your own"—and wishes us joy of the issue. Yes, Sir, the Post-office is ours; and even the wish of the right hon. Gentleman cannot impair the gift or arrest the blessing! It has been ours to take off a tax on the affections—it has been ours to give to the poor the benefit of those powers which annihilate space and time; it has been ours to give freedom to the intercourse of mind with mind, of heart with heart; and the people will not reject the boon even though the right

hon. Baronet blesses it. One other measure, too, is ours, in which I do not think he can claim a share—one great moral reform, which emanating from the legal profession, has shed its blessings among the wretched throughout the land—the Abolition of Imprisonment for Debt on *Mesne Process*. For this great and good work we are mainly indebted to the comprehensive sagacity and the unwearied zeal of the Attorney-general; and whether he shall sooner or later retire from the laborious, the painful, the invidious duties which he has discharged for a longer period than any of his predecessors throughout English history, he will carry with him not only the recollection of those years of strenuous industry which he has devoted to the public service—not only the consciousness which he shares with his illustrious predecessors, Lord Abinger and Lord Lyndhurst, of having sparingly and gently wielded the powers of the crown in their relations to the press, not only the great testimony borne to the judgment and the wisdom of those painful proceedings which he directed when the country's peace was lately endangered by misguided men, in the verdicts of juries, and in the tranquillity which has followed them; but he will retain the enduring satisfaction that he has left the law, in a most important point, better than he found it—that he has narrowed the limits within which misfortune is confounded with crime—that he has annihilated a thousand petty oppressions at a stroke, and with them a thousand practices in which cunning preyed upon distress, and debased at once the practitioner and the sufferer—that he has deserved the thanks of the mercantile interest for additional security, and "the blessings of those who are ready to perish." And if from the reform, I may turn for a moment to the administration of the law, I have a right to claim for those who have performed the most delicate and painful duties of the Executive Government—the supervision of criminal sentences, those first duties of a Ministry—a degree of care and attention, a firmness when firmness was needed, a wise and humane discrimination in all, to which their opponents have often borne testimony, and which their opponents, I believe, will emulate, but which they can never surpass. Sir, the right hon. Baronet in approaching the financial scheme of the Government, which has directly induced

the present attempt to visit them with Parliamentary censure, has wholly omitted to say a word on its essential merits; whether, therefore, he wishes us to regard his opinions on what he calls "the maddening question of the Corn-laws" as those which he has advocated in an elaborate pamphlet, and enforced in former speeches—or whether he has renounced his principles, now that they are adopted by his early friends, and is now prepared to defend the sliding duty as essential to the prosperity of agriculture, we must wait to learn another day. I will not, therefore, fatigue the House by attempting to discuss their merits now, further than to complain of the injustice which, I think, has been done to that scheme, not only by the right hon. Member for Pembroke, but by others who have considered only its abstract merits, and have compared it with nothing. I know they insist on the right to conceal their cards—they have a right to do as gamesters, who, when the cards are dealt and honours are divided, look for nothing but the odd trick; but have they a right to do so, or rather are they right in doing so, as statesmen, candidates for the confidence of the House of Commons, and for the Administration of an empire? A great exigency has arrived—how created is immaterial to the question of the remedy—but, if I must answer, I will say, by the acts of those who, during long years of misrule, mortgaged the industry of this country for ages yet unborn, in the vain attempt to extinguish liberty throughout the world. But the true wisdom is to look, not to the past, but to the future; the statesman who would govern must legislate for that future. Something must be done; for I can scarcely think the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge can have been rightly understood, when he was thought to propose to equalise our income with our expense, by letting things alone,—in which he would resemble that ingenious gentleman, Sir Abel Handy, in the play, who, when his house is in flames, and none of his various inventions are at hand to quench it, triumphantly exclaims to his son,—“I have hit it, Bob! perhaps it may go out of itself!” Now, it may be, that the scheme proposed for meeting the deficiency, not by increasing, but by lightening the burdens of the people, is in itself an evil—still it may be a less evil than the deficiency it proposes

to remedy, and a less evil than the substitute which will be applied. Can we judge in ignorance of what that substitute is? Are we prepared to affirm this bill of indictment in the dark? On all other great questions, the principles and purposes of public men stand open to the day; why are the financial questions, now the most urgent of all, to be exceptions to this rule? Above all, how,—when the objection rather relates to the time when the scheme is propounded, than to its essential merits—can we judge of the exigency, of the urgency of the call, unless we know what other resources may be in store? But the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, says, that great excitement prevails on one of the questions involved in the scheme—in which, by the way, he differs from some of the ablest organs of his party, who assure us there is no excitement at all worth mentioning, and that the attempt to raise it has been a signal failure—and, quoting the expression of Mr. Tierney, “that the malice of the devil himself could not have thought of preparing for a dissolution with the false cry of the Church in danger,” still would impute this malice of the devil to those whom he charges with raising the cry of cheap bread. Now I will not discuss the malice of the devil with the right hon. Baronet—I will make no invidious comparisons—I will do injustice to no one, present or absent; but I will fearlessly assert, that there is nothing more malicious or more devilish in the cry of cheap bread than in the cry of No Popery, or in that which the hon. Baronet seems about to echo of No Poor Law! I can scarcely tell what he desires when he speaks of excitement and dissolution; at one time he says, “Do not emulate the malice of the devil, by preparing for dissolution during excitement,” and the next moment he says, “Dissolve instantly!” Is it that his eagerness gets the better of his judgment—that he is so tremulously anxious to realise his triumph in the downfall of his friends, that he grudges the least delay, and thus he is led into these inconsistent wishes? But how idle it is to admit the justice, nay the necessity, of an appeal to the people, and then complain that excitement prevails through the land! Why, such an appeal, without excitement, is almost a contradiction in terms. The appeal to a great people cannot be pronounced or an-

swered in whispers. It must rouse—it must excite—it must awaken—it must rapidly present those vivid truths which it seeks to attest—it must call to its aid, not only the result of long studies and examinations, but the wants, the feelings, the affections of a great people. The Government will make the appeal, and will seek the solution of the true constitutional doctrine—not whether they have the confidence of Parliament, but the confidence of those who create it. I now approach to the close of the right hon. Baronet's speech, and with it the termination of this trespass on the patience of the House. I leave him in the undisturbed possession of his comparison of the Ministers to tenants, who, under notice to quit, in vengeance set fire to the property of the landlord; and to pirates who rush with torches to the magazine; but when he brandishes that flaring simile of the enemy of the Philistines, who sent three hundred foxes with firebrands among his foes, I must take leave to restore that comparison to its original occasion, and to its rightful owner, and leave the right hon. Baronet nothing but the boldness with which he has seized it, and the charity and the grace with which it was applied. It was used, indeed, against another Government on a parallel occasion—on a charge precisely similar: one of its objects was the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke; the speaker who applied it was the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who now sits beside him. On the 3d of March, 1831, Sir Robert Peel, addressing the Treasury Bench, where the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, then sat beside some of the Ministers whom he now assails, thus concluded one of his greatest speeches:—

“It is the duty of a Government to calm, not to stimulate, the fever of popular excitement. They have adopted a different course; they have sent through the land the firebrand of agitation, and no one can now recall it. But let us hope there may be limits to their powers of mischief. They have, like the giant enemy of the Philistines, lighted three hundred brands, and scattered through the country discord and dismay; but God forbid that they should, like him, have the power to concentrate in death all the energies which belong to life, and to signalise their own destruction, by bowing to the earth the pillars of that sacred edifice which contains within its walls, according to their own admission, the noblest society of freemen in the world!”

Thus has the right hon. Baronet, in generous oblivion of the past assault, seized the extinguished torch which once flashed before him, and relumined it with other light than that of genius, to brandish before those who with him endured its ancient fire. But I would turn for a moment to the true author of this splendid passage, and ask him whether the apprehensions which were then so honestly conceived, and so nobly expressed, have not proved to be visionary fears? The threatened administration did not expire—they appealed in the equipoise of the parties to the people—the people answered to the call—the majority of one became one hundred and thirty-six, and the second charter of our liberties became the law of the land. And are not those pillars, to which eloquent reference was made, as majestic and as stable as ever? Can the right hon. Baronet look at the great body of Gentlemen who now encircle him, returned to a Parliament under that law—to the state of municipal corporations—nay, even to the very vote which he hopes to carry in a reformed House of Commons, and not admit that these fears were vain? And why? Because the true Conservatism of England is not merely that which arrays itself under the banner of one party, however mighty—it is sheltered in the million homes of England—it is blended with all the “high endeavours” which are open to all, and the security of the “glad success” when obtained; it is associated with the piety, not of churchmen only, but of all; it is cherished by the consciousness which the humblest, as knowledge expands his vision, may enjoy, that he is a sharer in the triumphs of humanity and freedom throughout the world; and therefore, it is safe amidst the crash of parties, and the change of laws. What may be the issue of this motion, or what the issue of that greater appeal which it is believed awaits us, I will not pretend to conjecture; but of this I feel assured, that when those heats inseparable from the present state of parties shall have subsided, and we have passed away from this busy scene; when even the resentments of the right hon. Baronet themselves shall at last be still; that those who shall look with undazzled gaze on the events of these stirring times, will recognise among the men who have been now charged with weakness, a strength not born amidst great



majorities, nor dependant on them; a strength, not of the giant but of the enchanter; a strength, not composed of confederated monopolies; not cemented by borrowed hypocrisies; not envenomed by the poison extracted from old and blighted regards; but born of good hopes for man amidst glooms; matured by the just blending of the elements of conservatism and progression; which no temporary failure can destroy; for it chooses the happiness and freedom of a world for its aim, and posterity for its arbiters!

Mr. *Hinde* had listened with all attention to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down, and yet, after the hon. and learned Gentleman had devoted his whole talents and abilities to the task, he had been wholly unable to answer any one of the able arguments which had been urged by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke. The only accusation which the hon. and learned Gentleman had succeeded in making against the right hon. Baronet was, that having been a Member of the Grey Cabinet, he now refused to give his support to the miserable remnant of that body which now held the reins of office. In that refusal he joined, for he saw no security, that next Session the present Advisers of the Crown, might not make the ballot a Cabinet question, leave the adoption of the Charter an open question, and recommend the repeal of the union in the Speech from the Throne. The noble Lord opposite was pressed forward far beyond his own declarations, and he feared for the prosperity of the country, so long as the noble Lord directed its destinies. He did not accuse the Government of acting contrary to the interests of the country, but he must say, that it was essentially a Government of easy virtue. The noble Lord was unable to resist the pressure of the Radicals—he was unable to withstand the solicitations of the philosophers, and on all these grounds, he should give his hearty support to the present motion.

Mr. *Gillon*: I am unwilling to allow these debates to come to a close at a period of such vital importance to the best interests of the country, a period so interesting to those whom I have the honour to represent, without offering a very few observations to the House, and stating the reasons why I shall oppose the motion of the right hon. Baronet. The object of the motion I take to be this; to compel, if possible, her Ma-

esty's Ministers to resign, instead of dissolving Parliament, and to prevent an appeal to the people on the great questions which have been propounded for their consideration. Ample as are the stores of Tory gold, unscrupulously and successfully as they have been used on late occasions, at single elections, the Gentlemen opposite do not, very evidently, desire a general appeal to the people; when, their attention being so much divided, the resources of intimidation and corruption must act with a divided, and, therefore, less baneful injury on the independence, the honour, and the interests, of the country—less still, do they desire an appeal to the people at this moment, when the sophistries which might pass current in this House, must be laid bare before a discerning public—when an opportunity would be afforded of exposing the hypocrisy that dictates a pretended concern for the negro, in a party, who were, if not the opponents, at least, the lukewarm, the reluctant supporters of emancipation—of those who are revelling in wealth accumulated by slave-labour, wrung from the tortured sinews of the negro at a time when neither sex nor age were spared in their unholy lust of gain; who threw every obstacle in the way of the wholesome working of the Emancipation Act, who when slavery was abolished, endeavoured to carry it on still under another title, who resisted to the last every regulation of the Government for the protection of the person, and improving the condition of the negro; who, sending the whole of their own sugars to the British market on account of the exorbitant price their monopoly affords them, feed themselves and their dependents on sugar the produce of slave-labour in another country, and yet would deny to the English labourer the cheap use of one of the most wholesome necessities of life; when the alliance, I will not call it unnatural, but the unholy alliance of monopolists of every shade and degree, against the British people shall be held up in all its unseemly deformity to public execration. Such a general appeal as this suits not the views of aspirants for office, with whom deferred hopes produce symptoms of sickness, that brook no delay, and who, in appealing to the people, desire to turn the influence of office against the people's friends. Having lent my aid in the passing of the great measure of Parliamentary Reform, I rejoice to think that an opportunity is afforded me of recording my vote in favour of this, if not its first, its

most important and magnificent result—of recording my confidence in those who having had the courage to attack the borough-mongers in their day of power; having proceeded amidst the acclamations of a nation's joy, and the hideous howls of a despairing faction, driving them from power, have now the manliness to assault monopoly in its strongholds: to say to the monopolists, it is time to have a reckoning with you, you have cramped the energies of the noblest and most industrious people on the earth, you have limited their resources both of enjoyment and production, you have shut against the fruits of their labour the markets of Europe: country after country are closing their ports against them; state after state are learning by our baneful example, the noxious, the unnatural, lesson of prohibition. You have made starvation the inmate of the dwelling of the industrious classes, and sorrow and sickness the companions of his hours of rest; these things shall be no longer. We know your power, we know how many interests will combine against us—we know what effect intimidation can produce on the dependent, and what delusion and misrepresentation, can work in the minds of the uninstructed, but great in the righteousness, the humanity, the justice of our cause we fear you not. With what object has the people contended for the measure of Parliamentary Reform? Was it for the abstract love of change, or was it for the results to which it was expected to lead, of increased national prosperity, increased comfort and enjoyment to each individual of whom that nation is composed? What is it, in fact, to the great mass of the people, whether the Parliament that meet here be composed of the representatives of the breeches' pockets of the boroughmongers, or of those of the wealthy, the sober, the thinking, and the intelligent of the middle classes, if the one confer on them no more substantial benefits than the other. Many inroads have been made upon the old system of corruption. Stronghold after stronghold of monopoly has yielded to the impulse of public opinion and every concession to justice and the popular will has successively been resisted by the hon. Gentlemen opposite—if we have had reason to complain of the Government, it is on account of the slowness of their progress, it is because they have not sufficiently trusted to the people, because they have shown too much deference to those whom the people justly re-

gard as their hereditary foes. Little wonder is it, then, that when this magnificent scheme is propounded, which is to uproot monopoly from the land, which is to put an end to class legislation, which is to confer on the people in abundance those blessings which flow from the hand of a bountiful providence, and which have hitherto been intercepted from them by the cupidity and malevolence of man — no wonder that the whole herd of those who have hitherto lived by preying upon the people, who, to promote their own selfish views, care not a moment for the amount of public misery, they may produce — no wonder that the whole herd of monopolists should combine to repel from office those by whom these mighty results are to be accomplished. I feel confidence in her Majesty's Ministers because their measures are founded on the incontrovertible doctrines of free-trade, on the principle of meting out to all, the same measure of justice, on the principle that imposts are to be levied for purposes of revenue only, not for protection, because the revision which is to apply to corn, to sugar, and to timber, is to be extended to our whole tariff of duties. I rejoice, that the merchants and manufacturers have assented to these propositions, and that while they desire an alteration of those laws which enhance the price of the food of the people, and restrict the commerce of the country, they declare, that so far as they are concerned they will throw monopoly to the winds. This being the case, how can I as a landowner, and dependent upon land alone for my support, refuse my assent to the proposition to modify those laws, that regulate the importation of foreign corn. But, setting all this aside, I am prepared to contend as I have always done, that a fixed duty is better for the agricultural interests themselves, than that which was termed the sliding scale. I am convinced, that the energies of the agriculturists need but the stimulus of competition to call them into active life. Have not we heard serious lamentations about the destruction of the agricultural interests, by the low prices in 1834 and 1835, which occurred under that sliding scale, which is in such favour with those Gentlemen opposite; and yet, during these low prices was the time when in the north, the greatest exertions have been made; these exertions are now unabated. A system of improvement is going on totally unheard of in former times; by judicious draining, the produce

of the soil is in one place, doubled or trebled, and when I look to the extent of these improvements, and to the backward agricultural and undeveloped resources of a great part of England, I see no reason why we should not become an exporting instead of an importing country. When I look, also, to the putting an end to the gambling in corn, to the steadiness of prices about to be afforded to the agriculturists, above all, to the cessation of that drain of gold, which has proved so fatal to every interest in the country, I cannot doubt, that as a single measure even the agriculturists would be benefited by the change. I stated these views within these few weeks, to a meeting of agriculturists in Scotland, and they have been well received, I told them, that they must rely on their own energies, to effect a judicious economy and judicious expenditure, and not on restrictive and antiquated laws, for their support. It is easy to reason with judicious and intelligent men, such as I then addressed, though it may be impossible to carry conviction to the minds of the boors and serfs of Bucks. These great measures I assert, will be incomplete, unless another party be called on to bear their part of the general burthens of the State, I mean the monied interest, hence the reason why I have always desired the imposition of a property tax. I have deeply deplored the ruin and devastation spread far and wide throughout all the productive classes by the act which bore the name of the right hon. Baronet, the amount of which it is impossible to calculate. But, we are told, it is now too late to retrace our steps; it may be so; I will assume, for the present, that it is so; no one surely will contend, that that property which needed more than any other, the protection which was lent to it by the State, should contribute nothing to its support, while the landowner, the farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer, pay willingly the imposts placed on them; let not the monied interest alone refuse to bear its share of the national burthens. I shall always doubt the sincerity and honesty of those who refuse to accede to so just a proposition. I will abstain from entering upon any of the details of the separate measures proposed by her Majesty's Government, farther than to say, that to the principles of free-trade, not as mere celebrated principles, to be mused on by philosophers in their closets, but to their practical development I will give my most

complete assent. It is in opposition to these great principles, that the right hon. Baronet and the party with whom he is connected, must come, if they ever do so, into power—I pray that day may be long distant—I would not have hon. Members opposite lay the flattering unction to their souls, that even if they succeed in carrying this motion, they will either drive Ministers from office, or force them to a dissolution before time shall have been afforded to explain to the country the measures they have propounded for their consideration. On every principle which can actuate the conduct of a public man, I am led to place confidence in her Majesty's Ministers, in preference to their opponents. I have ever been favourable to the protection of the electors against the undue influence of intimidation and corruption by the ballot, I have ever been an advocate for increasing the responsibility of the representative, by shortening the duration of Parliaments. On both these points while I find a united opposition from the party opposite, I find the majority of those connected with her Majesty's Government, entertain consentaneous opinions with my own. I have ever been disposed to simplify, to widen, and gradually to extend, the basis of our representative system. On this point, the conduct of the two parties, in regard to the Irish Registration Bills, will speak volumes to the country. Should that party, so justly hateful to Ireland, succeed in obtaining the reins of power, and in annihilating the franchises of that portion of the empire, she may have just cause to dread, that their influence may be turned to crippling and impairing the liberties and privileges of the other parts of which it is composed. I call on her Majesty's Government to persevere in carrying into effect the great scheme which they have propounded to the country undismayed by the phalanx of monopolists and class interests, that may be united to resist them, satisfied that as their measures are founded on the broad basis of justice and truth, notwithstanding all interested opposition, they must and will prevail.

Mr. *James Grattan* was as ready as the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, to support her Majesty's Ministers, but not exactly for the same reasons. He considered this question one which materially concerned the interests of his own country, Ireland. He placed confidence in her Majesty's Government, because he conceived, that the whole of their policy, both at

home and abroad, was founded upon principles which were the best for the interests of the people. Both at home and abroad they had raised this country to the highest possible pitch of glory, character, and fame. The principles upon which the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, had acted since the last Session of Parliament, had redounded to his honour in the highest degree; and, by the course he had pursued, he now held the reins of power in his hands, not only over all the nations of Europe, but throughout the whole world. The question the House had to decide was not respecting the immediate proposition made by the noble Lord, the Secretary of State for the Colonies; but the question now was, what had her Majesty's Ministers done to justify that House in calling upon them to resign? Looking at all their past acts, in his opinion there was sufficient to justify the House, not to pass a vote of want of confidence, but to pass a vote of thanks. But he was anxious to look to Ireland. Before the present Government came into office, Ireland suffered under Insurrection Acts, Arms Bills, and every measure of oppression. Since the year 1831, when those who now governed the country assumed power, the progress of improvement in that country had been great indeed. More capital had been embarked there, and greater advances made in the comfort, well-being, and peace of the people, within the last ten years, than took place during the whole reign of the right hon. Baronet and his party. He had already said, that he considered the present vote to be one of assent to or dissent from the proposition of the noble Lord, either respecting the Sugar-duties or the Corn-laws. He was one of those who thought that it would be utterly impossible that the interests of Ireland could be preserved under the proposed duty of one shilling, or indeed at any other fixed duty, whether ten, eight, or twelve shillings. Under a fixed duty they would find that, all throughout the continent, there would be a fixed supply, and the whole trade would be taken from Ireland, and would fall into the hands of the cotton manufacturers, who would all become traders. With a free importation of articles called provisions—such as cattle, pigs, and so forth, how would Ireland be able to compete with foreign countries: and how would she be able to maintain her present trade? No; it would be annihilated. Notwithstanding these objections to the schemes of

her Majesty's Ministers, he should certainly support them on this occasion, because he had the fullest reliance on the soundness of their general principles; and furthermore, because he should dread to place Ireland under the sway of the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends.

Lord C. Hamilton was surprised to hear the hon. Gentleman express his confidence in her Majesty's Ministers, at the same time that he declared his dissent from one of the greatest measures that had been ventured upon by any Government in relation to the commercial, agricultural, and financial interests of this country—measures which it was evident had been brought forward merely for the purpose of enabling the Government to retain office, without any intention whatever to promote the interests of the people, and he was the more surprised when he heard the reasons assigned for feeling that confidence. The hon. Member said, that much as he disapproved of the measures proposed, yet he could not give to the Government the whole blame of having brought them forward, as he felt convinced it was chiefly owing to the headlong violence of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, who, by his attacks on the Irish Registration, had so weakened their position that some such measure was necessary—that is, that the Government were ready to sacrifice the interests of the country in order to strengthen their own party interests. This appeared to him a strange reason for feeling confidence in a Government, in fact it seemed to him the most severe condemnation a Government could receive. He asked the hon. Member who said so much of the high position to which Government had raised this country, whether, when they came into office, it was only a secondary state?—or did it then occupy an equally high place in the estimation of other nations, with the additional advantages of financial prosperity? With respect to the foreign policy of the noble Lord opposite, he was ready to express his admiration of the talents and perseverance which that noble Lord had shown in his embarrassed position; but while he admitted this he could not agree, that the result of his interference in the affairs of the East had been such as to justify the great expenditure to which the country had been put in order to keep up the large armaments which had been required in the Mediterranean and on the coast of Syria. This was sufficiently manifest in the pre-

sent embarrassed position of Turkey, and in the insurrectionary state of many of the provinces under her rule. To all the pleasing anticipations of the noble Lord of the beneficial effects likely to follow the promulgation of that new Magna Charta the hattı sheriff of Gullrâné, the grim array of 300 Christian heads around the walls of Nissa, gave but a melancholy reply. With respect to the precedent for the present course pursued by the Government, which was attempted to be drawn from the conduct of Mr. Pitt in 1784, that case certainly bore no analogy to the present; for the opposition which Mr. Pitt met with was a factious opposition, evinced in a series of vexatious resolutions, arising from the disappointment which rankled in the mind of the man by whom that opposition was headed, and this opposition was personal, not directed against his measures—it began before he had been re-elected after taking office, and continued in the shape of hostile resolutions which did not impede the Government of the country. But it ought not to be forgotten, that the majorities against which Mr. Pitt contended, were continually decreasing, and were soon turned into minorities, whilst the majorities against the present Government constantly went on increasing. And how was this majority increasing? why, by the gradual coming over of distinguished men from that side—it resulted from the downward and reckless course so eloquently described by the noble Lord, the Member for Northumberland, and was strengthened by fresh victories at every accidental vacancy that occurred. The majority against the present Government was one formed after they had been tried for five years, increasing as they were more fully known. The majority against Mr. Pitt decreased as he became known, till it was changed into a weak minority. Independently of this, Mr. Pitt had the most encouraging addresses from all parts of the country, and possessed, also, the confidence of the other House of Parliament. There had been an endeavour, too, to establish a precedent in favour of the conduct of the Ministers of the Crown in the course pursued by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, in 1835; but there was no similarity between the two cases. There had been a compact alliance and coalition entered into between the parties on the opposite side of the House against the right hon. Baronet, and the object had been to

put him out of office without giving him measures a fair hearing, or himself a fair trial. But the right hon. Gentleman had not endeavoured to retain power after the decision of an hostile majority against him upon any question which really affected the public policy. The division in the election of the Speaker, and the addition of three lines to the address did not interfere with the legislation of the country. On the first occasion that he sustained a defeat which prevented his carrying a measure he considered essential to the interests of the country, he resigned: therefore, his conduct affords no precedent for the course pursued by the present Government. These circumstances were the stronger, when it was recollected how the present Parliament had been called together by the Whig Government, and how the Queen's name had been used to influence the elections. The occasion of the last dissolution was the death of our late Sovereign, by which dispensation of Providence her Majesty was called to superintend the destinies of this great nation at the early age of eighteen, and although her Majesty brought to the task a most enlightened mind, a highly educated understanding, a firmness and self-possession never equalled by any one in her exalted and difficult position, yet it was impossible that her Majesty could have much knowledge of public men or much experience in public affairs. She was, therefore, obliged to place implicit confidence in those she found entrusted with the management of the affairs of the country—and how did they repay that confidence? by a most unsparing use of her Majesty's name for their own party purposes, and an unconstitutional attempt to bias the elections by placing her Majesty in the position of a canvasser. At that period, her Majesty was advised to write a letter of approbation of the conduct of the Viceroy of Ireland, and at the contest for Wicklow, that letter was posted and placarded through the county in favour of the hon. Member who had succeeded. He himself had seen a placard at the election for the county of Wicklow, taking advantage of that letter in favour of the hon. Gentleman opposite, by the inscription—"Read the Queen's letter!"—"Vote for Howard and Gratton." And the same was done in many other places, her Majesty's name being coupled with those of the candidates as supplicating the votes of the electors. He did not think the Government were justified in

making an appeal to the passions of the multitude, at the eve of an election, by a reference to certain popular measures, which, for the six years that they had been in office, they had been in the constant habit of stigmatizing and denouncing as unsafe to be entertained by that House. Their present course was not that of a Government, for they had, in fact, ceased to be a Government; but, of a sort of opposition, endeavouring to render it impossible for any other set of men to carry on the Government. How was it, that for six years, they had not brought forward these measures to which they had now made up their minds to pin their political existence, and if they really considered those measures so essential to the interests of the country, why did they not take blame to themselves, instead of casting it on Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, for having so long delayed them? How could the noble Lord come down and charge this side of the House, with interfering with the beneficent designs of Providence, when he himself, having been six years in office, has always opposed the very measures which he now brings forward. Surely the noble Lord, before he endeavoured to cast such a stigma on this side of the House, should have confessed his previous errors and felt shame for himself for having so long acted in contradiction to the beneficent designs of the Almighty. Having failed to carry through Parliament those measures which they deemed of the greatest importance to the country, he thought the Government were so confessedly weak that, upon constitutional grounds, they ought to resign their offices. He could assure those hon. Members who had opposed the Government on particular measures, and yet gave them their support on the present occasion, that they would do them little good by such an exhibition of inconsistency. Their support lost all moral weight, as it was notoriously given contrary to the wishes of their constituents, by acting in such a manner "they gave that which enriched not the Government, but left themselves poor indeed." The cries for cheap bread and cheap sugar were, doubtless, most calculating cries. But, both the time and the manner of bringing forward these questions were suspicious—for be it remembered, it was not till after signal defeats that any notice was given that such changes were in contemplation. He could not, therefore, be charged with making ungenerous imputations when he declared his conviction that

party wants, not the interests of the country, had prompted these propositions. The whole conduct of the Government opposing the bills to amend the Irish Registration, both this year and last, proved, that however important the question might be, they were even ready to consult their party interests at the sacrifice of those of the country. The evils of the state of the registry were not denied; but the cure was dangerous to the seats of their supporters, so they threw every impediment in the way; but being defeated, they brought in a bill of their own—but when the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, finding he could not succeed, withdrew his bill—they instantly withdrew theirs in spite of their former protestations of its importance—it had served to perpetuate the evil which was all that was intended. This year an equally shuffling course had been pursued, and though their bill had been defeated, yet they had succeeded in retaining the acknowledged abuses of the present system. This conduct gave those on his side of the House, a right to assume, that party objects were the real motives of their present actions. If, however, these were to be made the cries of the Government candidates, he hoped the noble Lord (J. Russell) would read the people his sentiments of a few years back, when he said,

"The Corn-law repealers did not take into account, the difference between a manufacturing and agricultural population in all that concerns the morals and well-being of the people—the national strength and the national tranquillity—nor do they consider the two or three millions of their countrymen they will reduce to utter beggary in the course of their speculations—this they call diverting capital into new channels."

Would the noble Lord now tell the people, that he undertook the repeal of the Corn-laws to prevent power from being diverted into new hands? It had been said, that the distress of the manufacturing districts had rendered it necessary to bring forward the repeal of the Corn-laws; but who, he would ask, were the men that had produced this distress? The very men who were now endeavouring to persuade the people that they alone could cure the evils of the present system. In common life, it was not unusual for people to rely upon the advice of empirics, when after a series of experiments which had always ended injuriously to the patient, they were told at last, that there was but one hope more, and that was an experiment which if it failed must under-

mine their constitution. In such cases all persons of sense would immediately leave the quack, and have recourse to some sound and constitutional practitioner. Unquestionably, the deficiency which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated did exist, but who were responsible for it? Were the men who had caused it to be still trusted with the management of the finances of the country? Last year, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer produced his Budget, he indulged in flattering hopes as to future prospects; the taxes, he said, had increased in productiveness, and he believed they would continue to increase, while the measure he proposed to the House would place the finances of the kingdom upon a firm basis. This was his language for the purpose of making his then scheme palatable, and what was his language now? That we must handle the deficiency with boldness. He did not imagine that this was the way to inspire confidence in the country or in the political adversaries of the present Government. Having reduced the finances to their present state—having proved that their former calculations were good for nothing, was it to be expected that the House of Commons, as guardians of the public purse, would longer trust the custody of that purse to such hands? He considered that the way to deal with the deficiency was to deal with the Ministers who had caused it. But if he had very little confidence in Ministers before they introduced the Sugar Bill, he had none at all afterwards, and least of all did he think that measure likely to relieve the distresses of the country. As to the late events in China, he did not think they were such as reflected any credit on the Government; and, although some time ago they assumed a high tone upon the subject, they had recently seen very good reason to take a lower note. The noble Secretary for Ireland had complained, that the speeches of his adversaries were “redolent of *Hansard*,” it was not wonderful that some Members of the present Administration did not relish quotations of that kind, for they showed a most amusing pliability of opinion upon most of the great questions that had recently come before the House, and they naturally did not like to see their names appended to speeches which so ably and severely condemn their present conduct. All their measures evinced vacillation and infirmity of purpose—at one time rejecting proposals with apparent resolution, and at

another declaring them open questions, and then promoting them to the dignity of Cabinet questions. Whatever might be the result of this debate, sure he was, that the people of England would not be satisfied with such conduct, and they would shortly have the remedy in their own hands. For his own part, he had never recorded a vote with more satisfaction than that he should give at the close of the pending discussion, nor did he ever feel more confident of giving satisfaction to his constituents, than by expressing an utter want of confidence in the present Government.

Sir George Staunton was sensible that he could add nothing in the way of novelty to the debate, and he was ready to rest the argument upon the speeches on his own side of the House, supported as they were by such addresses as the House had just heard from one of the opposite benches. The noble Lord had mentioned the affairs of China, and the right hon. Member for Tamworth had fairly admitted, that they were not yet ripe for discussion. Nevertheless, as the right hon. Member for Pembroke had taken a different course, he trusted that the House would grant him its attention for a few moments while he stated his reasons for coming to an opposite conclusion. The right hon. Baronet (Sir J. Graham) had asserted that the war with China (so to call it) reflected anything but credit upon Ministers; but he took leave to say, on the other hand, that what had been done gave the present Government a strong claim to the confidence of the House and of the country. The whole community of British merchants in China were surrounded and made prisoners in their factory; their lives were threatened, they were to be subject to a lingering death by starvation, and, under those circumstances, 2,000,000*l.* or 3,000,000*l.* were extracted from them. The right hon. Gentleman said, that he considered a war with China as a great calamity; he (Sir George Staunton) considered that any war was a great calamity, but he considered that it would be a still greater calamity if the Government of this country should want strength or spirit to redress such injuries. The right hon. Baronet had also quoted the opinion of the Emperor Napoleon, that it would be very dangerous to have a war with China; he owned, that high as Napoleon stood in some respects, his opinion was no great authority on Chinese affairs. He was a great warrior, but the world would hardly consider him a great states-

man; for all his policy ended on the rock of St. Helena. He would quote a higher authority upon this point—the opinion of the conqueror of Napoleon—of the Duke of Wellington, and he had said, that whatever disapprobation he might have at the other conduct of the Government, a war, having for its object the redress of those injuries, was undoubtedly just and necessary; and the noble Duke had added further, in reference to the statement that this was a war originating in opium, that “whatever might have been the original cause of the war, it could not have been opium.” He therefore thought, that, in the fitting out of an armament to obtain the redress of such serious injuries, her Majesty’s Ministers could not have lost the confidence of the House. That armament had been got ready in a manner that reflected the highest credit on the vigour and energy of the British nation, and the greatest credit on the Governor-general. It had arrived in China in due season, and its operations till the 4th July, when the island of Chusan was taken, were in every point successful. The events which had occurred since that period had certainly disappointed the hope that had been entertained by the country; they had even disappointed himself; but though he was disappointed, he could not say that he was surprised. Hon. Gentlemen who were present when he spoke last year would recollect that he did not hold out, on his own opinion, any sanguine expectation of an early termination of the war; indeed, he had said, that he was fully prepared for a tedious and protracted contest. It was not necessary to enter into any explanation of these subsequent events; until all the papers were upon the Table of the House, they would not be in a situation to discuss that question. It was impossible, however, not to entertain some conjecture as to the probable causes which might have produced those events. He could not but think, that it might possibly happen, that the discussions which had taken place last year in this country, that the very narrow majority by which the war was supported in that House, and that the intimation that it would not be supported if it were carried on for a long period, might have operated upon our own negotiator, and made him think it necessary to patch up the business in some way or other. That was merely a matter of conjecture, but they knew positively, that those discussions had produced an effect upon the Chinese

themselves. There had been published a memorial of the commissioner Lin, to the Emperor, calling upon the Chinese to resist the English, because they were a divided people, that there was a Chinese party in this country, and that the English Government were not capable of carrying on the war against them; and when they knew also, that the Emperor had refused to ratify even the very unsatisfactory concessions of his own commissioner, he could not but couple this with the memorial of Lin, and he could not but conceive, that if this had not been made a party discussion, they might now be congratulating themselves on the prospect of a speedy return to peace with China. Whatever contention there might be as to the propriety of the conduct of the plenipotentiaries, he did not see, that any blame could attach to her Majesty’s Government. All they could do, they had done. No sooner had the news arrived in this country of the failure of one plenipotentiary, than they immediately sent out another. He had not the honour of knowing Sir Henry Pottinger at the time of his appointment, but he was satisfied, from his long services in India, and from what he had seen of him since his appointment, that the British interests would be safe in his hands. On the question of China, therefore, he could not believe that the House would withhold its confidence from her Majesty’s present advisers. Upon the general question he would simply say, that the subject on which they were to vote was, whether the conduct of her Majesty’s Government, in remaining in office under the present circumstances of the country, was, or was not, constitutional. They had brought forward measures they thought most important, to reduce the prices of the necessaries of life, and to prevent any new taxation. And, without entering into the merits of those measures, he thought, that nothing could be more legitimate and constitutional than to appeal to the people if they were beaten in that House. He would therefore give a direct negative to the present motion.

Sir Walter James said, that nothing could reflect greater credit upon men than their having the manliness to abandon place for principle. When an hon. Member found himself convinced as to the propriety of a course he should have no hesitation in adopting that course. He (Sir Walter James) heard with some astonishment the speech of the noble Lord the Member for North Lincolnshire the other night, after



what he had stated a few days before at a public meeting in Lincolnshire, and after the noble Lord had received the compliments of hon. Gentlemen at the side of the House opposite to where the noble Lord sat, upon the course which he had taken. One of the charges which had been made against the speeches of some hon. Gentlemen near him was, that they had used language which was of too violent a description. His answer was, that when Ministers flagrantly deserted the principles with which they set out—the principles of Earl Grey—they deserved from those hon. Members who were alluded to, the application of such language. When the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had given notice of the motion before the House, he felt confident that the right hon. Baronet would most perfectly establish his case; but it did not require the great abilities of the right hon. Baronet to establish that case, for it depended on a plain statement of historical facts. He was not able to perceive that any speaker who followed the right hon. Baronet, had succeeded in encroaching upon the position which the right hon. Baronet had taken up, and which position he considered impregnable. With the proceedings of Earl Grey's Administration up to the passing of the Reform Bill the motion had nothing to do. That bill had been called a swindle by the hon. Member for Dublin; but if it were a swindle, it did not come from the Conservative side of the House. He thought it a proper remuneration if a party introduced the Reform Bill for their own purposes, that such a party should be destroyed by it. The noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, had urged as an objection against the motion of the right hon. Baronet, that the House of Commons had two years ago passed a vote of confidence in the present Administration, and that, therefore, it would not be fair to take in a period antecedent to that in proposing a vote of want of confidence in them. To that objection he would answer, that in public matters, as well as in private matters men were to be judged by their actions, and not by their professions, and it was quite clear that the House of Commons practically distrusted them. To show what the feeling of the House of Commons was, he need only refer to what had been the fate of the measures of Ministers for the last two years, and to the series of defeats and disgraces which they had been compelled to suffer during that period. Now, with respect to the

precedent furnished by the conduct of Mr. Pitt, and which had been so much relied on by the other side of the House as analogous to the course taken by the present Government, he contended, that that precedent did not apply, and that the course taken by Mr. Pitt differed in many respects from that pursued by the present Government. In the case of Mr. Pitt, the House of Commons in the course they pursued with respect to the India Bill, had, to a certain extent, assumed executive power. This was not the case with respect to the present House of Commons. Then it was to be considered, that there was a difference, inasmuch as the opposition given to Mr. Pitt, was a personal opposition. Then, when Mr. Pitt appealed to the country, he did not come forward with any new schemes to excite the people, but he came forward and appealed to the country on personal grounds. In the words lately made use of by the right hon. Member for Tamworth, when Mr. Pitt appealed to the country, he did so on the ground, that he should have a fair trial. Could it be maintained by any one versed in the principles of the constitution, that the Government ought to have continued to hold their places one moment after they found that they were acting in opposition to the spirit of the House of Commons? His right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, had stated, that there were three great measures by which he was willing to have the present Government tried by the country. But besides those measures, he could name other measures, and more particularly allude to the conduct they had uniformly pursued with respect to the Church—and the conduct they now pursued with respect to the Corn-laws. Well, then, there was another question, on which the passions were most easily excited and arrayed against each other—he meant the question of Parliamentary franchise. To show what had been the conduct of the Government, he need only refer to the noble Lord's address to the electors of Stroud, two years ago, and he would compare the principles put forward by the noble Lord at that time with his present conduct. The noble Lord, speaking of the Reform Bill, said, that it had been carried by Earl Grey, and other experienced statesmen, men accustomed to weigh the conduct they pursued, and it was carried with the concurrence of a considerable portion of the House of Lords—with the consent of a majority of the House of Com-

mons, and had the support of the intelligent and thinking portion of the country, and that such a measure ought not to be lightly disturbed. And the noble Lord proceeded to say, that he would not shrink from opposing those changes which might be brought forward by unknown leaders, and in which popular menace would dictate to property and intelligence, and that he would not assist (as the noble Lord expressed it) to stir the cauldron of popular excitement. True, the noble Lord did not himself stir the cauldron, but he put the coals under it, and when the cauldron was boiling, he would expect the Conservative party to attempt to take out the hot coals and burn their fingers in the attempt. But, notwithstanding the slur of the noble Lord, the Conservative party would not be afraid, they would attempt to take out the burning coals, and though they might be injured, they would brave that danger for the sake of the country. He thought, that the language which the noble Lord had applied to those who wished to disturb the Reform Bill might, with very little change, be applied to the conduct he now pursued, and would be equally applicable to the measures now under the consideration of the House. He might, also, refer to the expressions made use of on this subject, by Lord Melbourne, in the House of Lords, in which the noble Lord said, that the repeal of the Corn-laws could not be effected without shaking society to its foundations, nor without exciting every kind of bitterness and animosity, and that he did not think the advantage would prove to be worth the struggle made to obtain it. These were the principles avowed by her Majesty's Government two years ago, and they now brought forward measures, which they not only had condemned, but which they declared dangerous to the best interests of the country. This was the conduct that had lost them the confidence of the House and the country. The Whig party could not last long. The struggle now going on between parties must end in the triumph of the Tory party. They were the friends of the Church, and they were the friends of the property of the country—they were the friends of good order, of the constitution, and of the monarchy. On the other hand, the party opposed to them, were friends of the ballot, and of every democratic and revolutionary change. The contest between those parties must soon come to an issue, and, in his opinion, the sooner the better. Of

what important class in the country had the present Government the confidence? Had they the confidence of the clergy?—of the professional community?—of the army and navy?—of the law, and of those professions which numbered amongst them the best and wisest and worthiest men? Had they the confidence of the commercial and manufacturing interests (with the exception of a few who expected to gain advantages by their measures)? Had they the confidence of the colonial interest? Let them look to Canada, where a rebellion was produced by the neglect of the Government, and to Jamaica now enjoying that constitution which the Conservative party had preserved to them. He could assure them, also, that they had lost the confidence of the honest artisan, with whom their present attempt at delusion would fail, and who would feel that the cry of "cheap bread" was only under a thin disguise, the cry of "low wages."

Mr. Wallace had never heard such a rambling speech as that which the noble Lord had delivered, and which the hon. Member had praised. What did he mean by attributing the Arms Bill and the Irish Coercion Bill to the present Government? Those bills had been brought forward by the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire. By whom had the Coercion Bill been proposed? Why, by the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire. [Lord Stanley: No, no. By Lord Althorp.] At all events the noble Lord was the concoctor and the supporter of it. But by whom had the Arms Bill been proposed? [Lord Stanley: By Lord John Russell.] He begged pardon. He perfectly recollected the introduction of the bill into the House by the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire; and he also remembered that noble Lord proposing one of the most obnoxious and disgraceful provisions in it, that every man should have his name engraved on the arms he might have in his possession. Then allusion had been made to the mention of the Queen's name; and it had been stated it had been abused. Now, the Queen's name had been abused, but by whom?—by Gentlemen on the other side, at Canterbury and elsewhere. When her Majesty had expressed her determination to see equal justice done to all her subjects in Ireland, the Irish had made use of the Queen's name, with admiration at her noble conduct. But that name had been mentioned with every possible epithet of abuse by Gentlemen on the other side.

["No, no."] Hon. Gentlemen might say "No, no," but he would say "Yes, yes," and as a proof that he was right in saying "Yes, yes," he would refer them to Canterbury. The hon. Gentleman had designated the Reform Bill as a swindle.

Sir *Walter James*—I did not designate the Reform Bill as a swindle—I stated it was the hon. and learned Member for Dublin who had so designated it.

Mr. *Wallace* understood, then, that the hon. Gentleman had not called the Reform Bill a swindle on his own authority, and should not pursue that point further. With regard to what the hon. Gentleman had said respecting the noble Lord's former opinions on the subject of agitation, he had always regretted that the noble Lord should have published such opinions; but, at all events, the noble Lord was pursuing the right course now, and while he did so, the noble Lord should have his support. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, as an excuse for not stating what measures he would propose, had alluded to the difficulties in which he was placed, and asked for time for deliberation. Why, he had had three years for deliberation, for during the whole of that time he had been anxiously seeking the overthrow of the Government; and he should not, before these measures had been proposed, have been very sorry if the right hon. Baronet had succeeded, but now that Ministers were proposing measures which were really for the benefit of the country, he felt bound to give them his support, and should be very sorry to see the right hon. Baronet succeed against them. He would not inquire into their sincerity. The measures themselves were substantially good, and he would give his vote for them. He firmly believed that the agricultural as well as the manufacturing class would be benefitted by them. They knew very well that the wages they received would buy a much larger quantity of wheat were that wheat cheaper, and that so long as the landlords could maintain their monopoly, they would never have cheap bread. The mode of introducing corn at a fixed duty of 8s. was a greater protection than the agriculturists had a right to expect. With respect to the alteration in the postage, there had been manifested in that debate, a degree of heartlessness, and a want of care for the working classes of this country, which he had not expected to see in that House. Not one word had been said of the advantages conferred upon those persons. If the right

hon. Baronet had inquired, he would have found that though there had been a failure in a certain class of correspondence which was expected to pass through the Post-office, there had been a great increase in that class which it was chiefly intended to benefit. In what was expected to pass through the office in a printed form there certainly had been a great failure, but in manuscript correspondence the increase was considerable. In the year 1839, in the four weeks in May, 1,619,765 letters passed through the office; in the four weeks in August, 1840, there were 3,461,000, and in January 1841, 5,236,000. It was also very gratifying to see the increase in small sums of money sent through the Post-office. The windows for money orders were crowded with persons who were availing themselves of that means to send money to their parents and others residing in distant parts of the country. Indeed every branch of this establishment exhibited the importance to the public of the manful conduct of the Government in taking that most important step by which the public had obtained so great a boon.

Mr. *Cresswell* said, that there had been so much recrimination in the course of this debate, that he should confine himself as closely as he could, to the terms of the resolution itself. He agreed with the hon. Member for North Shields, (Mr. Ingham), that the first branch of the resolution involved a truism, because the Government had failed to carry those measures which they thought essential for the good of the country. But he had heard hon. Gentlemen opposite say, that they considered that the Government had a very fair share of the confidence of that House. He was ready to admit that they had as large a share as was desirable, but he could not agree, that it was such a share as rendered them fit persons to hold the reins of Government; and he would go further, and say, that since they had conducted the affairs of this country, they had never had that share of its confidence which enabled them to carry on the Government with advantage to the public, or with dignity to themselves. Let them look to the history of the Government. When they had succeeded in ejecting the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, they had done so by passing a resolution—that no measure for the settlement of the question of tithes could be satisfactory which did not embody the principle of appropriation. That resolution being carried, the right hon. Baronet

retired from office, and the new Government so far thought that resolution to be correct in the principle which it settled, that they brought in a bill exactly in accordance with it. Did they stand by that? He would not for one moment imagine that they had been insincere in their views, because if he thought so, he must believe that they had obtained office by false pretences; but what had they done? For six years they had held office, and they had not yet acted upon that principle, which they had themselves advocated, and the sanction of the House to which they had themselves procured. In 1835, they brought in a measure which was carried through that House, but was defeated in the House of Lords. In 1836 they again brought in the measure, but it was allowed to fall through without being sent to the upper House. But could it be supposed, that in 1837 the enemies of the Church would still support the noble Lord, unless some measure was introduced which would be of such a nature as their views dictated? It was found necessary to gain their favour by substituting some other measure for that of appropriation. In the month of March, 1837, a scheme for the abolition of Church-rates was propounded to the House, and the noble Lord succeeded in carrying his resolution by a majority of 287 over 282—a great proof, indeed, of the confidence then reposed in him by the House. But what was the Ministers' own opinion of their position? Did they think that they had the power to carry measures essential to the benefit of the country? They had never since brought it forward, though the Parliament had since then, been dissolved under these auspices. In the autumn of 1837, the new House met, for a short time only, nothing then was heard of the Church-rate measure. It re-assembled in 1838, and in that year the Government brought in a bill for settling the Irish tithe question, and not only did they omit the appropriation clause in it, but when they were called upon by the hon. Member for Sheffield to embody that clause in the measure, they refused. And thus they had gone on endeavouring to catch wandering voters from the Conservative benches, hoping to conciliate one half of their Friends on their own side of the House, and one half of their enemies on the Conservative benches. But having passed the Tithe bill, what was to be done to satisfy the enemies of the Church? In 1839 they proposed a scheme for the education of the people, but so un-

satisfactory to the House that they had been compelled to make some very important modifications in it; and then by a majority of two votes, they succeeded in carrying it through the House. Then came the ever-memorable Jamaica Bill. There at least the House withdrew its confidence, for the bill passed a second reading by so very small a majority, that it was given up; and the Government, having avowed that they had lost the confidence of the House, quitted office. Having done so, they returned under circumstances little calculated to increase that confidence placed in them by the House and by the country. They did not suffer the Session to close without doing something to induce the country to regret the resumption of their position; and so, notwithstanding the decreasing revenue, at the instance of the hon. Member for Greenock, they threw away 1,200,000*l.*, in order that the Post-office might be thrown open. He confessed that it appeared to him that that was a measure the least likely to be useful, because it relieved a class who were well able to pay their own postage; and in reference to many of whom it had been observed that many of them were rich enough to keep a Member of Parliament to frank their letters. In 1840, the confidence of the House was restored to the noble Lord. The hon. Baronet, the Member for North Devon, then proposed a resolution that the Government was not entitled to the confidence of the House, but the noble Lord triumphed by a majority of twenty. Now, though he was aware that there might be hon. Members in that House who might deem a resolution, the converse of that proposed by the hon. Baronet the same in effect with that resolution which had been brought forward, for his own part, he thought that there was a wide distinction between the two propositions; and that although the Government had been declared not to be disentitled to the confidence of the House, a resolution stating that they were entitled to its confidence would not have been carried. He begged now to be allowed to call the attention of the House to a few instances in which a practical want of confidence in Ministers had been exhibited. The first instance was that which had occurred in reference to the income proposed to His Royal Highness Prince Albert. The Government had proposed that 50,000*l.* should be the stipend granted to His Royal Highness; but, by a large majority, it was declared

that in the present state of the finances of the country, 30,000*l.* was a sufficient income, and the noble Lord failed. He took that to be a declaration on the part of the Members of that House that they had no confidence in the economy of the noble Lord. In the month of February, the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Warwick brought forward a question respecting the finances of the country, declaring that he had no confidence in the state of our financial affairs, or in the manner in which they were administered. That also was carried against the Government by a considerable majority; and in that, he thought that the House had shown a practical want of confidence in their mode of proceeding. The third motion made, calling on the House to say, how far they had confidence in the noble Lord and his colleagues, was that proposed by the hon. Member for North Durham, respecting the pension of Sir John Newport, calling on the House to declare its disapprobation of that pension, and their desire that it should not be made a precedent for future cases. In vain did the noble Lord say, that by the motion an imputation was cast on the Government—the motion was carried, and so the House showed that it had little confidence in the integrity of the Government of the noble Lord. What, then, was the confidence enjoyed by the noble Lord, and his colleagues? A confidence to enable them to shuffle through the Session, but was it a confidence in their weakness, or their strength? A confidence in their wisdom or their want of it; a confidence in their love of the country, or in their love of place. There was yet another measure upon which the feeling of Parliament, was exhibited. The Government had stated their intention, they best knew why themselves, of relinquishing their proposed measures for purifying the register in Ireland, and the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire brought in his bill, and on several occasions he obtained a majority against the Government, and at last, that bill had been defeated, not by votes, but the speeches of those who had sought to delay its progress. So much for the Session of 1840. In 1841 the noble Lord brought in his bill to give a new electoral constitution to Ireland—another instance, not of the strength of judgment, but of the weakness of position. Had the noble Lord, the confidence of the House on that measure? No; he was defeated by a considerable majority. The noble Lord now

came forward, for the purpose of renewing his system of agitation, by proposing an alteration of the Corn-laws. The noble Lord flattered himself with having the support of the country on that measure; but those who supported the Government proposition most warmly—if the language of public meetings was to be believed—did so in the hope of obtaining a total abolition, and not because they were friendly to a fixed duty. It therefore, only afforded another evidence of the weakness of Ministers. During five or six years the course which they had pursued had tended to no result, they had gone on, steering towards no certain port, without chart, without compass, bending to every gale, adapting their sails and their course to the variable winds of popular applause; shifting their purpose with every change of the tides, and compelled, for want of better protection, constantly to apply for that of their opponents. And now that they had been repeatedly defeated, and had lost the confidence of that House, the noble Lord refused to resign; and did so upon the ground alleged in his behalf by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Ingham), that he retained office merely until a dissolution could take place. But if that were the case, the noble Lord might have dissolved already, for he defied any hon. Member to get up, and declare that the object of the noble Lord in retaining office, was to promote the necessary business of the country, or, that the proposed Corn-law debate had any other real object than that of exciting turbulence throughout the country. The noble Lord retained office in order that the debates in the House might be made a means of rendering the representatives odious to the represented. It was possible that the noble Lord might succeed; but of the effect which the course he was about to pursue was likely to produce in the country, a very striking specimen had recently been afforded in the place which the noble Lord himself represented. A meeting against the Corn-laws had been called, and the following scene there took place. The account which he would read of it was from one, far from an enemy to the Noble Lord's proposition. He should quote from the *Globe* of the 24th of May, which paper copied the account from the *Cheltenham and Gloucester Journal*. The hon. and learned Gentleman then read the following paragraph:—

"Of the scene which presented itself during the progress of the proceedings, any des-

cription we can give would be faint in the extreme, compared with the reality. Advocates as we are for popular rights, and sincere haters as we are of the tyranny of the few over the many, we could not contemplate the aspect of this meeting without being struck with the wretched consequences which must result from the furious unreasoning tyranny of the many over the few. Looking down from the platform upon the immense mass of human beings which filled the body of the room, the majority of them with inflamed faces and cracked voices, yelling their discordant disapprobation at every speaker whose person they disapproved of, for they would not listen to his words: they seemed like the hundred-armed Briareus, ready to commit any violence and any folly that their excited passions might suggest to them. Their fickleness and inconsistency, too, were strongly exemplified during the discussion, if discussion it could be called, in applauding the most opposite and fallacious arguments, and cheering sentiments uttered by their Chartist leaders, which they hissed down and reprobated when put forward by the gentlemen who had called the meeting. The first decided outbreak of the prominent feeling of the meeting was given on the entrance of a leading manufacturer of the neighbourhood, who would seem to be unpopular on account of having reduced the time or wages of his workmen, we could not exactly understand which. The next tumultuous ebullition was on the voting a chairman to the meeting. Joseph Watts, Esq., moved, and Mr. W. Lewis seconded, the proposition, that Charles Stanton, Esq., be called to the chair. No opposition was offered, and Mr. Stanton took his seat: but he had scarcely done so, and was about to open the business of the meeting by some prefatory observations, when he was assailed with hissing, at first from a few persons, but which was soon joined in by a far greater number, and cries were raised that he had not been duly elected chairman, and insisting that the question of who was to preside should be put to the meeting. Every syllable that Mr. Stanton attempted to utter was drowned in the interruptions he experienced; and during the tumult, a person, in appearance diminutive and quite youthful, and rather shabbily dressed, came forward on the platform, and was received with a good deal of cheering from the Chartists, which demonstration he seemed very willing to understand was intended to signify he should act as chairman. Accordingly, after a brief space, he very coolly appropriated to himself a seat close alongside Mr. Stanton, and announced himself as joint chairman with that gentleman; and there he sat, affording throughout the evening a marked contrast in appearance and demeanour to almost every person around him. It seemed the triumph of the principle of democracy—a resuscitation of the *sans culotte* ascendancy of revolutionary France."

Was it to produce such scenes as this throughout the country, that the noble Lord proposed to stay in office? Was it to hold similar meetings in other towns, and produce other "triumphs of the principle of democracy and a resuscitation of the *sans culotte* ascendancy of revolutionary France?" Surely, this was not consistent with the spirit of the constitution. He trusted, however, that the noble Lord would pause, and ponder well on the proceedings at Stroud, and that he would still be saved from the ignominy which would attend such a course if generally pursued. The noble Lord, he believed, and some of his colleagues had some regard to posthumous fame. They had already, by the assistance of the hon. Member for Finsbury, obtained a name which they would find it difficult to shake off. There had been "Whig" administrations, "Liberal" administrations, "broad-bottomed" administrations, "coalition" administrations, and "reform" administrations; but in the hands of the present holders of office they had all dwindled down into a "squeezeable" administration. That term might seem ridiculous, but Ministers had better be ridiculous than worse; and if the *sans culotte* ascendancy of revolutionary France were thus to be revived and brought to bear upon the election of representatives of the people, the noble Lord, instead of being at the head of a "squeezeable" administration, might soon be at the head of a "wicked administration." In order to protect the country from such consequences, he should give his hearty support to this motion.

Dr. Lushington thought the House would not be surprised, when they recollected the circumstances which had recently occurred, and the vote which he had thought it his duty to give on that occasion, that he should feel anxious now to explain and defend the course which he proposed to take. Nothing was farther from his thoughts than to reoccupy the House with the debate that had recently occurred, in order to resay what he had then said, or to recapitulate the reasons why he then voted against Ministers, and why he now did not repent or do other than stand to the course he adopted. But he must still deprecate the course taken, both on the one side and the other with regard to that question. He denied the right of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to bind together three great important questions, different in principle from each other, and distinguished by peculiar circumstances,

and to compel the Members of that House to take them as a whole. On the other hand, he equally repudiated the course which the right hon. Baronet opposite had taken in the course of the former debate, when he thought fit to observe, that that question amounted to a great want of confidence. Such a statement he was entitled to make to his own adherents and supporters, and could he have had the meanness to shrink from his intended vote, might have been deterred from taking the course which he thought right by the expression of such an opinion; but he declared now, as he had declared then, that by the merits of the question alone would he ever be guided in giving his vote. With regard to the present motion, despite what had fallen from the hon. Member for Hull, he did still declare himself an adherent to Whig principles—he denied that he had abandoned them. And he would take the liberty of adding, that professing Whig principles—the great principles of Mr. Fox and Earl Grey—it was not to those who had ever repudiated and opposed those principles that they ought to look for their character, and whether or not they were entertained by individuals; but they ought to look to those who had stood by them when the contest was almost despaired of, and had never flinched in the assertion of them up to that hour. Nor was it such men as the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, who had left his friends on that side of the House, or the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, who had joined those who had ever opposed the principles of Mr. Fox and Earl Grey, to rise in that House and charge hon. Gentlemen who sat on the Ministerial side with defection from those principles. If they were called upon to say who should be regarded as the judges of what those principles were, they would point to those who had been from the earliest day up to the latest hour supporters and asserters of those principles—they would point to his hon. Friend the Member for Middlesex, (Mr. Byng) and the hon. Member for Surrey (Mr. Denison). In the House of Lords, he would point to one whose loss they all so deeply lamented—to the relative of Mr. Fox and the Friend of Earl Grey. The argument of the right hon. Baronet was, that Ministers being unable to carry forward the measures which they deemed necessary for the public good, were acting contrary to the spirit and principle of the constitution by retaining the Government. Throughout the very able speech of the

right hon. Baronet, he could not help admiring the care and caution with which he evaded the real question, though he perfectly well knew what it was. The right hon. Baronet touched upon it, and as soon as he felt that to proceed further would be inconvenient, passed on to some other topic. The sole question really at issue was, whether, looking to all the circumstances of the case, the Government ought to resign their offices, or to appeal to the people. In every instance quoted by the right hon. Baronet in support of his motion, there existed a clear line of demarkation from the present case—there being in those cases an absolute or a moral impossibility of dissolving Parliament and appealing to the constituency. Look at the case of Walpole. There the Minister had just met a Parliament assembled by himself at a time when the influence of the Crown was almost predominant in that House, and being defeated within a few months of its assembling, it would have been in vain for him to have again appealed to the people. With regard to the Administration of 1807, he remembered Mr. Canning to have said in that House (it was on the 9th of April):—

“I defy you on this motion, and on all other motions which you may make; I defy your majorities: I stand by the Crown, and shall appeal to the people.”

And that Administration had a right to do so, because the new Parliament had been called by his political opponents. In 1834, when the right hon. Baronet took office, he had a right to call a Parliament, because the existing Parliament had been called by his opponents. The present Parliament had sat four years; during that time great and important measures had been from time to time brought forward, in some of which Government had been defeated, and in some of them successful; and he wished to know whether, in the principles of the constitution, it was not competent to the Government (though, as all Ministers under such circumstances must be, they were judges in their own case), to go to the country, lay before it what they had done, and what they had attempted to do, and calling on the country to compare their principles with those of their political opponents. In the course of this debate he had heard it urged that, because an hon. Member might differ from her Majesty's Government on one or two questions, he was thereupon to refuse them his general support. And to his great surprise he had heard it said, that because the

noble Lord the Member for Lincolnshire thought that the ministerial plan for altering the Corn-laws would be detrimental to the best interests of the country, he was therefore called on to abandon all his former principles, and endeavour to bring into power that party to whose principles he had been during the whole of his political life opposed. He professed himself to be attached generally to the principles of the present Government, and had not the question of the other evening involved what he considered a very important principle, he should certainly have taken his usual course, and have voted with them. But with the opinion which he entertained on the subject, had he done so, his support would have rendered him, not an honourable adherent, but a miserable tool. There were undoubtedly cases where a Member of that House however strongly he might be attached to his party, was bound to act upon his independent judgment. But because he had voted in a particular way on the former occasion, was he to recant all the opinions which he had entertained and professed from the earliest day of his political life, and to disregard all the consequences which were to be apprehended (and he meant no disrespect to the right hon. Baronet when he said so) from a change of Government? Had he even contemplated the possibility of doing so, his first thought would have been of Ireland—that which the right hon. Baronet had, on a former occasion, admitted to constitute his greatest difficulty. Was that difficulty less now than it was two years ago when the right hon. Baronet made the declaration? Could he believe, that the right hon. Gentleman would be enabled to act on the dictates of his own sound understanding, then he might perhaps feel less alarm on the subject. How was Ireland governed now? In accordance with the wishes and feelings of the great majority of the people. In prosperity she was increasing—slowly increasing, yet still increasing; and peace and tranquillity, if not wholly established, were yet enjoyed to an extent infinitely beyond what she had ever known before. If the right hon. Baronet came into power, the inevitable consequence would be, that he would be compelled to govern Ireland by the aid of the remnant of a party the sworn enemy of the nation, and in spite of the wishes and opinions of the majority of the inhabitants. What course of policy might be expected from such an Administration, had already been indicated by the

Registration Bill of the noble Lord opposite—a measure which would have the effect of reducing the already too scanty constituency of Ireland. Were that measure to be adopted, or the Administration that proposed it to come into office, the present prosperity of Ireland could not be maintained. Confidence could not exist—the peace of the country would be disturbed and maintained only by force of arms; and all those prospects which it had begun to be hoped would ultimately be realised, would be abruptly and for ever put an end to. Other topics treated by the right hon. Gentleman led to similar considerations. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of France, and had reserved it to himself to say, whether or not the policy of Ministers had contributed to bring about that estrangement which had loosened the bonds of amity between the two countries. He admitted, that there had been a temporary interruption of the ties that had bound the two nations together. But who were the most likely to be able to restore a good understanding and re-knit the bonds of peace? A Government of that party which was in the opinion of the world, and, in fact, connected with those who for years past, and now were considered as the supporters of the despotic policy of Germany, Russia, and Prussia, or that party which had all along declared a preference for free institutions? One other topic there was to which he must refer, because it was one in which he had ever taken a deep interest—he alluded to the subject of education. The Government had always supported national education. They wished to see education spread from the mountains of Berwickshire to the mines of Cornwall, but they never would consent to consign so vast and so national an object to the hands of an exclusive party. Knowing how deeply interested his noble Friend the Secretary of the Colonies had always been, and still was, on the subject of education, he felt that the country would be sorry to lose his services in the cause. If he turned to the colonies he could not but observe upon the manner in which they were governed now, and regret that so little justice had heretofore been administered to the inhabitants of those colonies. The highest testimony to the present Administration of them had been given by the agent for the colony of Jamaica, in the speech which he had delivered at the bar on behalf of that colony; and he felt assured, that there was entertained but one opinion on



the subject in the colonies themselves. Having thus briefly adverted to some of the considerations which weighed with him in giving his vote, he must be allowed to add that he thought the debate had been carried on, on either side, with something of an undue asperity. The hon. and learned Member who had just sat down, in particular, had no right to stand up in that House, and denounce all persons on the Ministerial side as bitter enemies to the Church. Such charges could answer no purpose, except to embitter party spirit, when, if ever there was a state of public affairs which imperatively called for a calm consideration of the affairs of the nation, with a view to administer those remedies which would best effect an amelioration, if not a cure, that state of things existed at the present time. Surely, too, such a state of things fairly afforded a ground for appealing to the country. Look at the state of the manufacturing districts. The right hon. Gentleman, upon a former occasion, referred to papers to show that the trade of the country was in a flourishing state; but whatever might be the appearance on paper, the reality was a state of the deepest suffering and distress, so much so that it would be impossible for the people of this country to maintain themselves, unless the trade and manufactures of the country not only did not remain stationary, but unless they advanced. Enormous wealth might be made a boast of. Exports and imports might be pointed to in triumph, but if they did not come up to the wants of the people, absolute wealth amounted to nothing, and the population must perish by slow and miserable means. Had any one proposed a remedy for this state of things, in lieu of that proposed by Government? He had heard of none. He did not mean to say that the right hon. Baronet was called on to propose a Budget, but only some general plan for the diminution of these distresses, endured with a resignation for which every Member of that House, and every man possessing property, owed much to the sufferers. But there was a limit beyond which human endurance could not enable man to exist. Nature must fail; and unless some remedy were applied, the inevitable consequence would be the entire destruction of our industrious population. He was not then going to discuss the alteration of the duty on sugar, for that was not the proper time for doing so; but, looking to the proceedings which had taken place on the motion of the noble Lord the Member

for Liverpool, he felt justified in saying that imputations had been thrown out which must be discarded by candid minds, and he then denied, as he had before, that the question only regarded the continuance of our trade with the Brazils. This was the only consideration on the subject which he wished to advert to, and as he had ever supported, from the earliest period of his political life, all measures for the abolition of slavery, he should continue to do so. With respect to the other measures of the Government, he believed that the people of this country would express their feelings in favour of them in such a voice as to compel that House ultimately to adopt them. He believed that on the discussion of these measures they could not abandon them unless they were prepared to abandon the population of this country to entire despair. This was probably the last time which he should have the honour of addressing the House, and he begged to avail himself of the opportunity, if there was any doubt entertained on the subject, of avowing himself to be still a party man and strongly attached to those principles which he had hitherto professed, but he did so without entertaining any bitterness towards his antagonists, and he hoped when he quitted that House that he should do so with the satisfaction of thinking that he did not leave a personal enemy behind him. He should cease now to trouble the House, and he should only add, that he was as anxious and as sincere as ever for the maintenance and promotion of the cause of civil and religious liberty all over the world, and that he cordially concurred with those with whom he had hitherto acted in extending free institutions in this country and in foreign nations, as that was the surest road to promote and secure the peace, the prosperity, and the happiness of mankind. Such were the opinions which he had constantly entertained, and it was his anxious hope that such opinions would continue to influence others in as wide a range as possible.

*Sir William Follett:* Mr. Speaker, I charge the right hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets with no inconsistency, because, on a former night, he gave his vote in favour of those principles to which he has been long and sincerely attached;—I charge him with no inconsistency, because now, faithful to his party attachments, he is about to give what he says may probably be the last vote he will ever record in this House, in favour of that

party with which he has long been connected. Neither will I stop to enquire whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman is quite right in saying that neither he, nor the Members of her Majesty's Government, have ever swerved from the old Whig doctrines of Mr. Fox and Lord Grey. I cannot, however, help expressing my surprise, that when the right hon. and learned Member referred to living Members of that party in this House—when he alluded to the hon. Members for Middlesex and Surrey, he did not also allude to the noble Earl himself, whom he described as the head of that party, and inform us whether Lord Grey is one of the firm supporters of Ministers in the other House, and an opposer of the course of conduct which they are pursuing. Is it because the right hon. Gentleman well knew, that Lord Grey, instead of being a supporter of her Majesty's Government, condemns their conduct, and the course of policy pursued by them? I do not agree, either, with the right hon. and learned Gentleman in the mode in which he has stated the proposition we are now discussing. He said, that the question between us, on this side of the House, and Ministers, is this—whether, when a Government has sustained a defeat in this House, either upon some legislative measure, or a question denoting a want of confidence, there is anything unconstitutional in the Government's appealing to the people. I will not contend that there is. I believe, that a Government which should appeal to the country, under such circumstances, would be acting fully in the spirit of the constitution; but I say that that is not the course pursued by the Government, and I say that this resolution is brought forward, not to condemn an appeal to the people, but to condemn the continuance in office, without such an appeal, of a Ministry who have not had, for many Sessions, sufficiently the confidence of this House to enable them to carry any of their measures through Parliament. How have you, who sit opposite, spoken of dissolution, and an appeal to the people? Under what circumstances is it announced? In the course of this debate—I believe on the second night—it was for the first time announced, by the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, a member of the Cabinet, that the Government did, at no distant period, intend to dissolve Parliament—that they had advised her Majesty to that

course, and that her Majesty had assented to it. Why, then, I ask, do you not dissolve? Is it that you do not mean to dissolve until you have had a discussion in this House on the subject of the Corn-laws? Yes! that subject, which, of all others, the right hon. and learned Gentleman said ought to receive calm consideration—aye, a calm, cool, and dispassionate consideration! The language of Ministers is this:—"We mean to dissolve; but, before we do so, we intend to propose to you an alteration of the Corn-laws—a question most deeply and powerfully affecting the passions and interests of the people. We intend to propose this, but we do not mean to ask you to concur in it; it is not with that view the proposition is brought forward. We have no expectation, and no intention, of passing it into a law, for we mean to dissolve Parliament immediately after it shall have been discussed." Is this previous discussion proposed with the view of aiding the consideration of the measure at a future period? No; it is suggested only for this object—that, in the course of the debate, appeals may be made to the passions of the people out of doors, which you hope may produce results serviceable to you at the coming elections. The fact was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary at War, who told us, plainly and distinctly, that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his Budget, he had no expectation whatever of being able to carry the proposition respecting the Corn-laws. If we could entertain any doubt as to the object of Government, in asking us to discuss the question of the Corn-laws under a threat of dissolution, it must at once be removed by the course which the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had taken with respect to the bill for amending the Poor-law. Why should not the Government proceed with that measure? They had every reason to believe, that it would meet with the concurrence of the House, and be passed into a law. But the noble Lord declares, that he will not proceed with the bill, because, forsooth, it is one which deeply affects the passions of the people, and because it would not, at this moment, obtain that cool and calm deliberation which it required, but would be made the text for speeches intended to have an effect upon the approaching elections. It seems to me impossible for any one to doubt that

this bill was abandoned, only because Ministers thought, that if they proceeded with it, the course which they and their supporters would take respecting it would operate injuriously to their interests in the elections, whilst they wish to force on a discussion about the Corn-laws, because they think that the speeches which will be made, in this House, will create a feeling in their favour out of doors. I can appeal to the authority of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, for evidence as to what would be the nature of a discussion on the Corn-laws under existing circumstances. I can assure that right hon. Gentleman, that no one admires more than I do his talents and his eloquence; but I declare, that I scarcely dare venture to express the feelings which some portion of his speech, the other night, excited in my mind. Did the right hon. Gentleman consider it to be consistent with the position which he occupies in this House, and the country, to express a hope that he might see the spirit of 1831 revived at the forthcoming election; and that the people would have strength enough to resist the overbearing aristocracy? [*Cheers from the Ministerial benches.*] Hon Members opposite cheer; but will the right hon. Gentleman say, that he considers it consistent with his duty, as a Cabinet Minister, not to soften and smooth down jealousies which may exist between different classes of the community, but to attempt to aggravate, and inflame their passions and prejudices, and to array class against class in bitter hostility? Does the right hon. Gentleman recollect, that the noble Lord at the head of the Administration of which he is a Member said, of the spirit of 1831, that it had stirred society to its foundations—arrayed one class of the community against another—man against man, and left behind it feelings of distrust and of the deepest enmity? And yet this is the spirit which a Member of the Cabinet thinks fit, in his place in this House, to express a hope may be called again into activity. I believe, however, that the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues will be disappointed in their expectations. I believe, that the people are not ready, at their bidding, to display again their spirit of 1831. I think, that the people will not be persuaded to array themselves in classes, one against another, to the injury of all, for no purpose except to keep her Majesty's Ministers in office, and to extricate

them from the difficulties of their position. I believe you have greatly overrated your power of agitating the people. But to return to the immediate question before the House. The Members of the Cabinet who have yet addressed the House, have taken different grounds of opposition to the resolution proposed by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth. I must, at once, admit, that we who support the resolution are bound to make out the two branches of the proposition, namely, that Ministers do not possess, and, for some time past, have not possessed, sufficiently the confidence of the House, to enable them to carry measures which they believe to be essential to the welfare of the country; and that their continuance in office, under such circumstances, is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution. The right hon. President of the Board of Control, boldly denied the first branch of the proposition. He asserted, that Ministers have sufficiently possessed the confidence of the House to carry their measures, and he quoted a list of those which, he said, they had carried. My right hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, disposed of most of the measures comprised in the right hon. Baronet's list; and I assert—and I challenge any Member on the other side, who may speak after me in the debate, to disprove the assertion—that, from May, 1839, (and that date forms an essential ingredient in the consideration of this question) when her Majesty's Ministers themselves declared that they did not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to conduct the affairs of the country, they have not been able to carry through this House any measure, without the concurrence of my right hon. Friend, and the party opposed to them. The right hon. Secretary at War took a different ground; he admitted, that Ministers did not possess sufficiently the confidence of the House to enable them to carry legislative measures; but, then, he said—and anything coming from him is entitled to consideration—that it was not contrary to historical precedent, or the spirit of the Constitution, for Ministers to continue to hold office under such circumstances. I deny, altogether, the validity of that doctrine; and I say, at the outset, that the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have excluded from his consideration one essential ingredient,

which has existed in the practical working of the Constitution since the accession of the House of Hanover—I mean the mode in which the Government is conducted in Parliament, and the opposition to the Government by party combinations, here, and in the other House of Parliament. The right hon. Gentleman entirely overlooked that essential ingredient in the working of the constitution; and surely the House must perceive the wide distinction which exists between the present case and the historical precedents referred to by the right hon. Gentleman—three only in number—which consisted of defeats on isolated measures, brought forward by Governments in the height of their power, and supported by great majorities in both Houses of Parliament; but crossed in this House by temporary and partial causes, operating on those measures alone, and not affecting the general policy of the Government. This was the case with respect to Lord Sunderland's Peerage Bill, and Mr. Pitt's Fortification Bill, which was lost by the casting vote of the Speaker. These cases occurred when the Government was in the height of its power, with a majority in both Houses of Parliament, and enjoying the favour of the Crown. At the time Lord Sunderland was defeated on the Peerage Bill, he not only possessed the confidence of the Sovereign, and of both Houses of Parliament, but it was actually impossible that any other Government could be formed, for, with the exception of the party opposed to the reigning family, there was no party in the country strong enough to form a Government. Lord Liverpool's defeat on the Property Tax also occurred at a moment when he possessed the confidence of the Crown, and of both Houses of Parliament. Now, the case of the present Government is not analogous to any of those quoted by the right hon. Gentleman. We insist upon the continued inability of her Majesty's Ministers to carry any measure, no matter what importance they might attach to it, without the consent and except by the permission and sufferance of the party in opposition to them. It is in that sense I read the resolution which has been submitted to the House by my right hon. Friend, and that is the position in which Ministers, for several Sessions, have been placed; and I maintain, that their continuing to hold office, under such circumstances, is con-

trary to all historical precedent—contrary to every principle of representative government—and contrary, also, to the spirit of the Constitution. It is hardly necessary for me to cite any proof in support of the proposition, that the Government have not sufficiently the confidence of this House to enable them to carry legislative measures. The cases quoted in support of the contrary proposition, have all, with the exception of one, been disposed of by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke. One of the cases to which my right hon. Friend did not refer, and which the right hon. President of the Board of Control brought forward as the last proof of the power of the Government, was the bill for the registration of voters in Ireland. Now, I think, that any one acquainted with the history of that measure, must admit, that it would be impossible to select a stronger proof of the weakness of the Government, and the want of confidence of the House towards them, than is supplied by every circumstance which attended it. A bill was brought forward by my noble Friend, the Member for North Lancashire, for the purpose of correcting the abuses which exist in the registration of voters in Ireland. It was opposed by all the power of the Government; but carried, nevertheless, through several stages. The Government then found themselves compelled to introduce a bill upon the subject, the principle of which the right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, said, was carried by a majority of five on the second reading. What principle does the right hon. Baronet mean to say was carried by that majority? Does he wish it to be understood, that the proposition contained, and almost concealed, in the bill for altering the elective franchises for counties in Ireland, received the sanction of this House? Why, upon that important point, Ministers were left in a minority upon two divisions—one of eleven, and the other of twenty-one. And that is the measure which we are referred to, as furnishing evidence that Ministers possess the confidence of the House of Commons. That bill was abandoned by the Government; and its abandonment was immediately followed by a budget, containing a proposal for supplying the deficiency of the revenue by means of measures which the Government never intended to carry. May I be permitted here, for a moment,

to advert to the precedent of Mr. Pitt, in 1780, which has been quoted in justification of what, I contend, is the only instance, in the history of this country, of a Ministry remaining in office, year after year, and Session after Session, without possessing the power of carrying its measures. As the conduct of Mr. Pitt has been referred to, I wish it to be understood, that I am far from saying, that there may not be cases, extreme and peculiar in their character, in which a Minister of the Crown may be justified in holding office, even against majorities of the House of Commons; but the circumstances under which a Minister could be justified in taking that course, are so extreme and peculiar, that they are not likely to occur frequently; and I venture to suggest, also, that any struggle maintained, under any circumstances, by a Minister against a majority of the House of Commons, cannot continue long, without endangering the power and prerogatives of the Crown. What, however, was the conduct of Mr. Pitt? Although a considerable space of time has elapsed since the period referred to, yet we are so arrayed in parties against each other, that it is difficult even now to form an impartial judgment on the subject; but, I believe, I am borne out by the fact in stating, that posterity has pronounced its condemnation of the coalition of Lord North and Mr. Fox; and that it has also pronounced its condemnation of the India Bill, brought forward by that coalition, as an undue encroachment upon the prerogative of the Crown, and, at the same time, as being likely to prove dangerous to the liberties of the people. That was the opinion of Mr. Pitt—that was the opinion of the king; it was also the opinion of a majority of the House of Lords, and of a majority of the constituent body. That was the position in which Mr. Pitt stood; and I ask, whether, fighting, as he was, for a great public principle, that Minister was not fully justified in resisting, for some time, as he did, namely, from December to April, the combination of parties arrayed against him, on no public principle, but, as he thought, actuated by selfish and factious motives, and not supported by public opinion? But, surely, the struggle which Mr. Pitt maintained on that occasion, can afford no justification for a weak and powerless Ministry, not acting on public principles.

[*Hear, hear.*] Why, what public principle are Ministers acting upon? Is it the principle of free trade, involved in the alteration of the Corn-law? Why, when did they announce that principle? When, I ask, did they announce the great public principles which have kept them in office, since May, 1839, down to the present moment. It was not until within the last fortnight, after their defeat upon the Irish Bill, that we ever heard of this great public principle. Ministers have, for years, been maintaining a struggle against the Commons House of Parliament, and have they stood upon that great public principle? No, it was never heard of till this moment; and I think we have the admission of the right hon. Secretary-at-war, that it is brought forward now, not with any view to its being carried into effect, but merely to serve the temporary purpose of the moment. I shall, perhaps, be allowed to refer briefly to another precedent, which has been quoted as a justification for the retention of office by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite—I mean that of Sir Robert Peel, in 1835. I own I should have thought, that, if that precedent had been referred to at all upon this occasion, it would have been in condemnation of the conduct of Ministers. What are the facts which the right hon. President of the Board of Control stated, in connexion with the course pursued by my right hon. Friend in 1835? He stated that he possessed the unbounded confidence of the Crown, and of a large majority of the House of Lords; and the right hon. Baronet added, that he now felt himself at liberty to state also, as an historical fact, that not only did his late Majesty repose entire confidence in him, but he felt the greatest repugnance to receiving the present Ministers into his councils. These are the interesting historical facts which the right hon. Gentleman has told us; and I will add another, namely, that my right hon. Friend was supported by a great and powerful party in this country, and that, at the time of his resignation, he had in the House of Commons a majority of the representatives of one portion of the United Kingdom. I do not advert to that fact at all, for the purpose of making any contrast between the representatives of one part of the kingdom and another. I do not allude to the circumstance with any such object, but merely with the view of showing, that my right hon. Friend not

only possessed the confidence of the Crown and of a majority of the House of Peers, but was also supported by a great and powerful party in the country. Having all that support, however, in addition to possessing the confidence of the King and the House of Lords, the first moment my right hon. Friend was obstructed in a legislative measure he resigned. I will repeat the words which my right hon. Friend used when announcing his resignation to the House of Commons, and then I will ask whether his conduct affords any justification for the continuance in office of her Majesty's Ministers, under the circumstances in which they are placed? My right hon. Friend said—

“ I do not hesitate to declare, that, under no circumstances, under the pressure of no difficulties, would I ever advise the Crown to resign that great source of moral strength, which consists in a strict adherence to the practice, the principle, the spirit, and the letter of the constitution.”

Those were the principles upon which my right hon. Friend acted when he resigned office in 1835; and if the present Ministers had acted upon the same constitutional principles, they would, when they returned to power, after their resignation in 1839, and found that they had not obtained any increase of confidence from the House, have again resigned their offices. I do not mean to enter into any discussion relative to the circumstances which led to her Majesty's Ministers return to office in 1839. They may have been justified, under the circumstances attending the attempt to form another Government, and the failure of that attempt, in making another experiment, with the view of ascertaining whether the House of Commons and the country were disposed to place increased confidence in them; but, at all events, it must be admitted that the experiment signally and entirely failed; and that so far from obtaining any further share of confidence, every thing which occurred within these walls, and throughout the country, betokened a diminution of confidence. The first step they took, upon their return to office, was to abandon their own Jamaica bill, and to adopt another which was dictated by my right hon. Friend the Member for Tamworth, and forced on them by this side of the House. At that time Lord Melbourne—rejecting the doctrine of the right hon. Secretary-at-war—declared

emphatically, in his place in Parliament, that the worst possible Ministry for this country was that which did not possess power to carry its legislative measures. Yet, from that time to the present moment, Ministers have remained in office without any accession of power. Now, I ask whether the very course pursued by the Government with respect to the great question now under consideration, does not furnish a practical illustration that their conduct is inconsistent with the pure spirit of the constitution. How have they maintained themselves in office? I say, by making concession after concession, and attempting to conciliate—and, by conciliating, encouraging—that extreme party in the country, whose views the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, has repeatedly denounced as dangerous to the Monarchy and constitution. To prove this, I will refer to the conduct of the Government upon one or two great questions. What course did they pursue with respect to the ballot? They opposed it as a government—they denounced it as a dangerous innovation upon the constitution, and as tending to a revolutionary change in the Government of this country. Nothing took place which ought to have produced any alteration of their opinion upon this subject; but, finding that they were growing weaker in this House, they determined upon making a concession to the extreme party, and the ballot became an open question. So, with respect to the extension of the franchise; Ministers opposed that—they declared their intention to stand upon the Reform Bill, as the settlement of a great constitutional question;—and, when the hon. Baronet, the Member for Preston, proposed to introduce a bill to extend the right of voting to 10*l*. occupiers in counties, the noble Secretary for the Colonies opposed it, as a dangerous alteration of the enactments and principles of the Reform Act. Yet, this very Session, Ministers themselves introduce into a bill, professing to be for the amendment of the Registration system in Ireland, a more sweeping alteration of the elective franchise for counties than that proposed by the hon. Member for Preston—more opposed to the spirit of the Reform Act, because it destroyed every franchise created by that measure, and substituted for them one uniform franchise of 5*l*. These are some of the concessions made by the Go-

vernment to the extreme party; and now they propose to make another, upon the question of the Corn-laws. It was only last year that the head of the Government declared, that no one but a madman would think of making any alteration in the Corn-laws. [*No, no.*] Lord Melbourne stated, in the month of June last, not yet twelvemonths ago, that he would listen to no proposal for altering the Corn-laws. [*No, no.*] What! is that meant to be denied? I did not mean to read the noble Lord's words, because I thought they were too well known to admit of any dispute; but, since a contradiction has been offered to my description of them, I will read them. I ask what is the meaning of this passage:

"If he could be convinced that it was safe and just at once to do away with protection, to adopt a perfectly simple state of the law upon this subject, and to have an importation of corn entirely open and free of duty, he should then be inclined to propose or advocate inquiry. His noble Friend had carefully abstained from stating what it was that he meant to do, whether his object was to have a fixed duty, or a diminution of the present ascending and descending scale; but whichever of these alternatives was his noble Friend's plan, as he saw clearly and distinctly that that object would not be carried without a most violent struggle, without causing much ill blood, and a deep sense of grievance, without stirring society to its foundations, and leaving behind every sort of bitterness and animosity, he did not think that the advantages to be gained by the changes were worth the evils of the struggle, by which, their Lordships might depend on it, the change could alone be effected. They had seen great changes at no distant period—changes which had stirred society from the bottom, which had excited man against man, divided the whole country into parties, and left behind the deepest feelings of discord and enmity. He, for one, was not for adding to those feelings, by rashly adventuring to stir and agitate them, and upon these general grounds, he felt himself justified in saying 'no' to the motion of the noble Earl."—*[Cheers]*

What! can hon. Members cheer that? That speech was made only in June last; and are we now to understand that the noble Lord who made it, and his Government, are prepared to stir society to its foundations? Are they prepared to array class against class, and man against man, by a proposition which, be it observed, they themselves declare, at the time they propose it, they have no expectation of carrying? What justification, I ask can be offered for the agitation of this question by Ministers,

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whilst Lord Melbourne remains at the head of the Government? If a proposition respecting the Corn-laws has been brought forward, as has been admitted, not in the hope that it would be carried, but for the purpose of exciting the feelings and passions of the people, I am at a loss to conceive how it can be defended by hon. Members opposite. Can any hon. Member refer me to an instance, in the history of this country, of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, having a large deficiency to supply, coming down to the House of Commons, and submitting a budget, containing propositions which his colleagues themselves admit can never be available for the purpose for which they are brought forward? Can any Government stand excused for thus trifling, not only with the feelings and interests of the people, but with the revenue of the country? The proposition relating to corn is not the only portion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's budget which the right hon. Gentleman must have known could not be made available for the purpose for which he proposed to bring it forward. The same observation applies to the proposition relative to the Timber Duties. When we find the Governor-general of Canada urging, that, if Ministers did intend to make any alteration in the duties on timber, which must operate injuriously to the interests of the inhabitants of Canada, due time, at least, should be given for the consideration of the proposition, and to enable persons who had embarked their capital in the timber trade to divert it into some other channel. I think it is absurd to suppose that Ministers could ever have contemplated the possibility of that part of their budget becoming available for its professed object. What, then, is the meaning of bringing forward propositions, calculated, from their nature, to agitate the people of this country, and to excite discontent in a great colony, which has been recently the theatre of a rebellion, in which a great experiment—that of the legislative union of the two provinces—is now going on, and along the whole frontier of which is, if not a hostile country, at least a population a great portion of which is anxious to take advantage of any symptom of discontent in Canada, in order to convert it into an instrument of hostility against this country. Such is the budget of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—such is the conduct of the Government! They bring

forward propositions which they admit they do not expect to carry; and then we are told, that they are maintained in office upon a great public principle! I own it appears to me, that the course adopted by Ministers affords the strongest practical proof—if any were wanted, after the historical precedents to which my right hon. Friend referred on submitting his motion to the House—that the continuance of Ministers in office is contrary to the spirit of the constitution; and I see nothing in the threat of dissolution, to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman who preceded me referred, and which my hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Shields, (Mr. Ingham) has considered sufficient to induce him to vote against the motion. I say, I see nothing in that threat of dissolution, in the mode in which it was announced, or in the time at which it appears likely to be executed, to prevent me giving my vote in favour of the resolution of my right hon. Friend. On the contrary, I think that the manner in which the threat of dissolution has been announced, in the course of this debate, is an additional reason why I should support the motion. I shall give, then, more cordial support to the resolution of my right hon. Friend, because I think that both the propositions contained in it are fully and clearly made out, and because also, I am satisfied that the course of conduct which has been pursued by her Majesty's Ministers, and which, perhaps, they have been compelled to adopt in consequence of the position in which they stand with respect to this House and the country, cannot longer be continued without exposing to equal danger the real power and prerogative of the Crown, and the peace and happiness of the people.

Sir George Grey: I confess it was not without feelings of curiosity I saw my hon. and learned Friend (Sir William Follett), who has just addressed the House, rise to maintain the truth of the proposition propounded in the resolution moved by the right hon. Member for Tamworth, because I was at a loss to conceive how he, with the reputation he so deservedly enjoys, as a great constitutional lawyer, could undertake to support the opinion expressed by that proposition, namely, that a Government, being unable to carry a measure of great importance, which they, for the first time, have submitted to the House, is bound at once to relinquish office, without

allowing the people of this country an opportunity of expressing their opinion upon the measure, and the conduct of their representatives respecting it. I, however, was gratified to find, that my hon. and learned Friend abandoned that proposition altogether. In opposition to the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, and many other Members who had previously addressed the House in support of the motion, my hon. and learned Friend, at least, has fully admitted, that it is perfectly in consonance with the spirit and practice of the constitution for the Ministers of the Crown to advise the Sovereign to exercise her prerogative of dissolving Parliament, and appealing to the people. I ask whether there is a word about dissolution in the resolution of the right hon. Member for Tamworth? No! the resolution is a sort of declaratory law of the principles of the constitution, which would lead to the inference, that any Government which may be unable to carry measures which they think essential to the prosperity and welfare of the country, are bound at once to yield to the opinion of an existing Parliament, and to resign. After listening to many of the speeches which have been delivered on the other side of the House, I had arrived at the conclusion, that the main object and intention of the motion was to drive the present Ministers from office, and to enable hon. Gentlemen opposite to take their places, without an intermediate appeal to the people. The right hon. Member for Pembroke the other night expressly denounced a dissolution as a reckless, dangerous, and, I think he added revolutionary proceeding. I suppose the right hon. Baronet had come fresh from the library, after reading the yet unfinished speech of the right hon. Member for Tamworth, in 1831—a speech which was interrupted by the Black Rod summoning this House to the Bar of the House of Lords. That speech was not in terms so strong—certainly, it was not so vituperative—as that of the right hon. Member for Pembroke, who seems to consider himself privileged to use harsh language towards men whom he was once proud to call his friends. The right hon. Member for Tamworth in 1831 was sitting opposite the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, who is now sitting by his side, and who answered him; he was also sitting opposite the right hon. Member for Pem-



broke, who remained silent under his attack. The right hon. Member for Tamworth denounced, in strong terms, the course pursued by the Government of that day. He said, that they had laid measures upon the Table without the intention of passing them, but for the mere purpose of creating popular excitement—that their course was fraught with danger, and must lead to tumult and disturbance. It was a gratifying scene the other night when the right hon. Member for Pembroke was reminded by my noble Friend near me of the dissolution in 1831, to witness the enthusiasm with which, recalling the feelings of his better days, he exclaimed—“Dissolve! Yes, we did dissolve—but we dissolved with spirit! You should have dissolved the moment you were defeated.” I cordially concurred in the opinion then expressed by the right hon. Baronet, as to the course taken in 1831, but I could not help recollecting, that the hon. Members on the other side of the House, who cheered the right hon. Baronet with so much enthusiasm, had cheered the right hon. Member for Tamworth with equal vehemence, when he attacked the right hon. Baronet, and those with whom he was then associated, for having ventured on a dissolution of Parliament in 1831. That circumstance must have been gratifying to every person who took an interest in the great measure proposed in 1831, and it induces me to entertain a sanguine hope, that before another ten years have passed, the right hon. Baronet will be found amongst those who will cheer the course which the Government have now taken, and who will find, in the resolution to dissolve Parliament, grounds for the approbation of posterity, whatever opinion may be entertained respecting it at the present moment. Up to the time of the delivery of the hon. and learned Member for Exeter’s speech, I conceived, that the object of the motion was to obtain a vote, which those who proposed it believed would have the effect of inducing Ministers to abandon their offices, without making an appeal to the people. That I now find is not the case. It is not an appeal to the people, it seems, which hon. Members opposite dread—though many of their speeches look very much as if they did dread it—but it is an appeal to the people after the subject of the Corn-laws shall have been debated, not at county meetings, not at borough meetings, but in

a manner worthy of the subject, by the representatives of the people in this House—upon its merits, by means of which the constituencies of the country may know not only the votes which their Members have given, but the reasons on which they are founded. Why do hon. Gentlemen opposite deprecate the discussion on the Corn-laws in this House? I could understand them if they deprecated the discussion of the question at meetings such as that alluded to to-night at Stroud, which must tend more than anything to bring public meetings into contempt, and which exhibit an unhallowed union between Chartists and Conservatives, who attend for the express purpose of interrupting the proceedings, and whose exploits are ostentatiously paraded in the columns of the Conservative journals as proofs of public opinion against the measures proposed by the Government, whilst hon. Members in this House take advantage of them in another way, exclaiming—“Look at the advocates of popular rights! They cannot meet without creating a tumult.” The noble Lord, the Member for Marylebone (Lord Teignmouth), informed us the other night, that he had spent three hours with three deputations of Chartists, who declared, that they would support a Tory Government in preference to the present Administration, because they believed, that the former would do more for them than the latter had ever done. I wish the noble Lord had felt himself warranted in going further, and had told us what are the measures which they intimated their expectation of receiving. These are the men who disturb and bring discredit upon public meetings, But I ask, whether it is possible to suppose, that any such scenes will take place within the walls of this House? and whether, on the contrary, the subject will not be discussed with the calmness, deliberation, and dignity, becoming such an assembly, and that by that means much of the delusion which exists on the subject of the Corn-laws may be dispelled? That it may be inconvenient to the hon. Members opposite to have the question discussed, I do not mean to deny. The right hon. Member for Tamworth expressly stated, that he would have no concealment on the subject of the Corn-laws. He said, that he retained the opinions on that subject which he had expressed last year. But I profess, that after listening

to the right hon. Baronet with the utmost anxiety and attention, all I could collect from what fell from him was, that he was for the maintenance of a sliding scale in opposition to a fixed duty. Was that being explicit? It is self-evident, that a sliding scale may be consistent with absolute prohibition, or with the absence of all protection whatever. When my noble Friend gave notice of his proposition in the first instance, he stated it was the intention of the Government to propose a moderate fixed duty. Upon that occasion my noble Friend was met by several Gentlemen, who alleged, with not unnatural eagerness, that my noble Friend, by stating his intention to propose a fixed duty, was imparting no useful information, and that it was necessary he should make known the amount of the proposed duty. Now, the same observation may be more justly applied to the right hon. Baronet's declaration of his preference of a sliding scale. When my noble Friend was pressed to state what would be the amount of duty, he did so; I wish the right hon. Baronet would be equally explicit as to the details of his sliding scale. I say, that your object is to conceal your views from the electors. You want to go to the hustings merely as the advocates of a sliding scale against a fixed duty, and to avoid making any declaration to which you can be fixed. While petitions are pouring in from the agricultural districts against alterations of any kind, the right hon. Baronet deprecates agitation, because, he says, it may prevent the settlement of the question. Has not the House a right, when it is called upon to transfer its confidence from the present Government to the right hon. Baronet, to know what settlement he means to propose? It may be extremely convenient not to debate the subject here, particularly at a time when candidates—who may be supposed to be in the confidence of the right hon. Baronet, one of whom, indeed, held a cabinet office under him—are making professions which are totally inconsistent with the maintenance of the present Corn-law, and which, if they have any distinct meaning, imply a concurrence in the proposal of the Government on this subject. One of the principal grounds on which the proposition before the House rests—and this has not, I think, been distinctly adverted to before—is the modification which the measures of Government have undergone

in deference to the opinions of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The right hon. Member for Pembroke, in adverting to the modification of measures which have been brought forward by the Government, alluded, in terms of the greatest apparent satisfaction, to the alterations made in the Irish Municipal bill; and he instanced that case as a proof of the weakness of Government. Now, it appears to me, that the modifications which the Irish Corporation Bill underwent, and at which the right hon. Member for Pembroke expressed so much delight, were not in the slightest degree owing to a want of confidence in the Government on the part of this House, but on the part of the House of Lords. The fact is, that hon. Members opposite knew that they had the means of effectually opposing the measures of the Government, though supported by a majority in this House, because they knew that they were supported by a majority in the other. Let me ask—and it is an important question, before the House comes to a division on the motion before it—on what principles does the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, propose to conduct the Government? The hon. and learned Member for Exeter asked, on what public principle the Government acted? I, on the other hand, inquire, on what grounds does the right hon. Baronet ask the confidence of this House? What is the principle on which he rests his opposition to the Government? On looking back to the history of former Parliaments, I find that the principles of an opposition, at least, have been clearly defined—have been embodied in measures laid before Parliament. I find, also, that the principles of civil and religious liberty, which were constantly maintained by the Whigs in opposition, were repeatedly brought before the House. What has been the course of the present opposition? Has the party opposite, which boasts so much of their strength, introduced a single popular measure into the House? What measure have they brought forward, during the existence of the present Government, embodying their principles? What measure have we seen testing their sincerity in sympathising with the wants of the people? What measure testing their desire to extend popular rights, or the sincerity of their conversion, of which they occasionally boast, to the principles of the Reform Act? They have brought forward

no measure, with the exception of the one relating to Ireland, with respect to which the right hon. Member for Tamworth, in opening this debate, was ominously silent. In that respect, I think the right hon. Baronet exhibited the prudence which usually characterises him. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet, if left to himself, might be able to govern Ireland; but he is associated with men, in whose prudence and good intentions towards that country I can place no confidence. The House will recollect the Irish Registration Bill, introduced by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, which was significantly termed the other night, by the hon. Member for the city of Durham, a bill for the better government of Ireland. That bill is not likely to form a ground for inducing the House to transfer its confidence to the hon. Gentlemen opposite, and yet that is the only measure which they have brought forward as a party; being the remedy which they propose for admitted evils prevailing in the registration system in Ireland, but avowedly only a partial remedy for those evils. Even the hon. and learned Member for Exeter could not help drawing a distinction between the English and Irish representatives, although he afterwards endeavoured to retract what he had said. The hon. and learned Gentleman, doubtless, was led into such a train of thought from reading those analyses of the divisions in this House which constantly appear in the columns of journals with which he is conversant. We know that in these articles the Irish representatives are held but as dust in the balance, precisely in accordance with the principles on which the bill of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, was founded—a bill which, under existing circumstances, would destroy the vitality of the Reform Act, and convert representation into nomination. The noble Lord who introduced the bill himself anticipated that this would be its effect. [Lord Stanley: No.] The noble Lord, certainly, if not in the discussions on his own bill, in those which took place on the Government bill on this subject, stated his apprehension, that circumstances in Ireland, as affecting the relation of landlords and tenants, might tend to destroy the representative system in some counties, and that it might become necessary, when this result should have occurred, to

consider what measures would be requisite to meet the evil. I ask whether such a result is not in accordance with the feelings which lead to the analyses of the divisions in this House, and with the sentiment which, unluckily, for his party, escaped from the hon and learned Member for Exeter, when he stated that Sir Robert Peel's Administration in 1835, had a majority of the English representatives, as distinguished from those of Ireland? Are these the principles on which you mean to maintain the union? The hon. and learned Member for Exeter, in referring to the Poor-law Amendment Act Bill, asked why, if there were to be no discussion upon that subject, should there be any with respect to the Corn-laws? I do not complain of the spirit and manner in which the hon. and learned Member for Exeter alluded to that bill; but I cannot help expressing my deep regret at the tone and spirit in which the right hon. Member for Pembroke referred to it. I believe, that if there is one thing more than another upon which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, has prided himself, and justly so, it is that he has cautiously abstained from mixing up party considerations with the subject of the New Poor-law, and he has always endeavoured to discuss it with calmness and deliberation. The same line of conduct was not observed by the right hon. Member for Pembroke, although he was one of the authors of the measure, and although nothing has fallen from the right hon. Baronet since the introduction of the bill for the amendment of the Poor-law, which could lead the House to suppose that he intended to withdraw his support from it. I never heard a syllable drop from him to that effect, nor has he ever suggested any alteration; and yet, on the present occasion, he brought down the bill in his pocket, and went, as it were into committee upon its clauses, in order that he might have an opportunity of heaping obloquy upon those with whom he was formerly associated. But when I am asked why, if there is to be no discussion about the Poor-law Act, there should be any upon the Corn-laws?—I answer, that the reason is obvious. The Poor-law has been discussed, over and over again, in this House. It is not a single discussion on the Poor-law that is wanted. The bill for amending the Poor-law has been read a second time, and has been long in com-

mittee, and the opinions of most Members are well known respecting it. That law, moreover, is now the law of the land, and there exists no intention of suffering its provision to expire. Again, the discussion on the Corn-laws will not occupy more than a few nights at the utmost; whilst the committee upon the Poor-law Act Amendment Bill, which had already lasted several weeks, would probably have extended through as many more, and thus have postponed till a distant period of the dissolution, for which hon. Members profess themselves so anxious. With respect to the other measure of the budget, it is clear, from the speeches of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, that he considered the question of the sugar duties to involve no moral obligation. It is, in his view, entirely a question of expediency—of supply; and there is no reason why the right hon. Baronet, shortly after his accession to power, might not propose the same measure. On the timber duties, I really am at a loss to know what the opinions of the right hon. Baronet are. He told the House that he would be very explicit; but his explicitness consisted solely in saying, that he would reserve his opinion until he knew the effect which the measure was likely to produce in the present state of Canada. I can quite understand the right hon. Baronet taking these political considerations into account; but I cannot understand his abstaining from expressing any opinion whatever on the question itself, irrespective of such considerations, at the very time when he was professing to give an explicit statement of his views to the House. It is of the greatest importance that, before this present motion is decided, the House should understand fully what the opinions of the right hon. Baronet are on the great questions which must engage the attention of Parliament, no matter who is at the head of affairs. As far as I am able to judge, the right hon. Baronet now supports the same views which, in 1830, drove him from power. Everyone knows, that it was not the division on the civil list, which caused the right hon. Baronet to retire from office at that time. It was the feeling in the counties on the subject of Reform, evinced by the Yorkshire election,—the question put to the Duke of Wellington by Lord Grey, on this subject, in the House of Lords, and the answer given to it, which excited

such a feeling throughout the country, as to make it clear to the right hon. Baronet, that the Government, of which he was a Member, no longer possessed the confidence of the country, and that any further appeal to the people would be useless. In accordance with the principles which he then entertained, the right hon. Baronet opposed the Reform Bill, and has subsequently opposed every popular measure brought forward by the Government, as long as opposition to such measures could be safely conducted; and when, at length, he has supported them, his support has been given with the object, in which he has unfortunately been too successful, by the help of a majority in the other House, of reducing the value of such measures, depriving them of their popular character, and rendering them unpalatable to the people. With regard to the budget, I fully admit that, as far as it has been hitherto discussed, her Majesty's Government do not possess the confidence of the present House of Commons sufficiently to enable them to carry the measures which they have proposed; but they have a powerful minority in favour of the principles which they maintain, and are therefore determined that the country should decide between them and the monopolists by whom they are opposed—should decide whether or not an effort should be made to supply the existing deficiency in the revenue, and, at the same time, to relieve the burthens of the people. The House may endeavour to prevent such an appeal—it may transfer its confidence to the right hon. Baronet and those associated with him—it may follow up the present resolution, if adopted, by an address to the Crown, praying for the dismissal of the present Government, without any appeal to the people;—but let me caution you to beware of forfeiting that confidence which the people ought ever to repose in their representatives—to beware of compromising the respect due to this House; not, as was suggested by the right hon. Baronet, by a disregard of your own privileges, but by a disregard of the wishes, and a neglect of the interests, of the great body of the people.

Mr. Handley: Sir, at this late period of the evening I have no wish to prolong the debate unnecessarily, sensible as I am of my inability to command the attention of the House; but it must be obvious to

hon. Gentlemen that, from the position in which I am placed by this resolution, it is impossible I can allow the debate to close without addressing to them a few observations. I am the more compelled to do so in consequence of the speech with which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, closed the last evening's discussion. That right hon. Baronet had thought fit to address a lecture to my noble Friend, the Member for North Lincolnshire, and myself, on the subject of consistency—a lecture which, considering the source from which it came proved the right hon. Baronet to possess a degree of modest assurance not often met with in this House. The right hon. Baronet was reported to have said, for I had not the advantage of hearing him, that both my noble Friend and myself declared that, as far as we were concerned, “the Corn question should never be brought forward in that House as a Government measure.” Now, never having intended to state anything that could bear such an interpretation, and believing that I never had, I carefully examined the reports of all the observations I had addressed to the House connected with this subject, and I found nothing that could possibly bear such a construction, except that, when explaining to the House a misrepresentation on the part of a morning paper, which asserted that, I not only approved of the mode in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had introduced the question of the Corn-laws to the House, but that when the time came I should be happy to second him in dealing with the details, I certainly had said that, so far from approving the mode in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had introduced the question, I very much disapproved of it; and that, so far from assisting him in carrying out the details, if it depended on my vote, the right hon. Gentleman should not have the opportunity of considering it at all. Now, is it on words such as these that the right hon. Baronet has not scrupled to fix upon me a pledge to join in a vote of censure and want of confidence against that Government with which, with the exception of my vote upon the sugar duties, I have constantly acted? Is it upon words such as these that I am to be taken to have declared that, because I differed with her Majesty's Ministers on one point, I should withdraw my confidence from them upon all subjects in which I had hitherto

concurred? Is it upon such grounds as these that the right hon. Baronet, who the other evening asked, if he met a madman in the streets, should he not be bound to rush upon him and wrest the weapon from him to prevent mischief; now counselled me, as it were, to a breach of the peace, inasmuch as it would equally be my duty to waylay the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, between Downing-street and this House, and wrest from him the Corn-bill which he proposes to lay upon the table of this House? Is it upon grounds such as these that the right hon. Baronet, himself no Zephyr, calls upon the “heavy agriculturists of Lincolnshire,” as he is pleased to designate my constituents, to eject me from my seat? Whether or no they will adopt his advice time will show; but if they do, there is at least this marked distinction between my case and that which befel the right hon. Baronet on a former occasion, namely, that my constituents will reject me because I shall have been true to my principles, while the honest grey-coats of Cumberland dismissed the right hon. Baronet because he had proved false to his.—The right hon. Baronet had truly said, on the former evening, that the motion of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, was not founded upon the case of a single defeat, but on a succession of defeats on measures which they deemed essential. Now, in as much as the sugar duties is the only question upon which the Government has sustained a defeat in which I have assisted, and the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, has carried back his resolution, even so far as to embrace the Appropriation Clause (there was probably a good reason for not ante-dating his resolution previous to that period, seeing it might be extremely inconvenient to the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, and the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke); and seeing that the question of the Timber Duties and the Corn-laws had not as yet been submitted to the consideration of the House, I am more inclined to look upon the right hon. Baronet as a warning rather than as an example. I am the rather induced to adopt his precepts in preference to his practice—to follow his doctrine rather than imitate his acts. Therefore it is that I have had great satisfaction in finding, in that fertile source which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, affords to all those who

undertake the labour of wading through his speeches, of precedents and arguments in support of any and every opinion which they may choose to profess; I repeat, I have been delighted to find a passage in a speech addressed by the right hon. Baronet to his constituents at Carlisle, on January 12th, 1835—and I trust the right hon. Baronet will not plead the statute of limitations—so apposite to the present occasion, that it is deserving of the greatest attention. That speech is printed evidently by no hostile hand, and it gives the right hon. Baronet's reasons for not accepting the offer of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, to join his Administration. Of that Administration the right hon. Baronet speaks as follows:—

“And I must add this, that, in my opinion, the composition of that Ministry is as bad as I can well imagine, for it is entirely composed of men to whom and to whose measures I have been all my life opposed.”

Still, if I recollect rightly, that Ministry embraced the right hon. Member for Cambridge, with whom the right hon. Baronet now sits in close contact. It embraced also the right hon. Member for Harwich, and the right hon. and right reconciled Member for East Kent, who a short time before, had indelibly branded his right hon. leader, the Member for Tamworth, with the warning motto—“*Nusquam tuta fides.*” But the reasons which the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, gave for not accepting office, were so forcible, so sound, and clothed in language so much better than I could hope to furnish, that with the permission of the House I will read them.

“I rejected the offer, on the ground of public duty, for I could not think that I should have been acting right, that I should have been discharging my duty to my country, or showing that proper regard which I conceive due to my own character, if, because I had differed from my late colleagues upon one point, I had plunged into opposition to them upon all points with men against whom I have struggled during the whole of my political life. Such conduct I should have looked upon as inconsistent with private honour, and it could not have advanced the public good.”

Now, Sir, I well know and readily acknowledge my great inferiority to the right hon. Baronet in both talent and station; but not to possess that talent and that station, together with the glittering prospect which the right hon. Baronet doubtless pictures to himself of power and

place, would I consent to sacrifice that private honour which the right hon. Baronet seemed to think, and I perfectly agree in the sentiment, was compromised by the individual who “differing from his Friends upon one point, plunged into opposition to them upon all points.” Now, Sir, I perfectly agree with the right hon. Baronet who last addressed the House (Sir George Grey), that the resolution before the House implies two points; it calls upon me to censure the Government with whose measures, with one exception, I have concurred; and it at the same time, calls upon me to admit that the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, is the person into whose hands I wish to see power confided. Now, Sir, let me examine what degree of confidence I or my constituents are justified in placing in the right hon. Baronet, even on the question of the Corn-laws, upon which the right hon. Baronet fancies he has been so explicit. The right hon. Baronet has referred us to his speech of last year on the Corn-laws; he adds,—“By that speech I am willing to abide.” Now, Sir, I listened most attentively to every word of that speech, and I remember conversing with some hon. Friends, who were supporters of the right hon. Baronet, and we completely concurred in this, that never had the right hon. Baronet made a speech so full of reservations, so interlarded with “buts,” and “on the other hand,” and “at the same time;” but that there was not a word of that speech which he could not unsay, if it suited the occasion, except that he felt himself called upon to express his decided predilection “for a sliding scale.” and then, turning round to his Friends for their ever-ready cheer, added that, “as to the details, of course he reserved to himself the right of dealing with them as he might think fit.” Talk, Sir, of a sliding scale, without the details; why, it is the details that form the whole pith and marrow of the measure. It could not be difficult to furnish the right hon. Baronet with a sliding scale which would practically act as a low fixed duty. I would ask the right hon. Baronet, where did he intend to fix his pivot? At 70s., or 60s., or 50s., or 40s.? What is to be the ratio of the ascending and descending scales?—What the vanishing point? On the part of the farmers of England, I ask the right hon. Baronet for some definite information: It must not be forgotten, in these days of

class interests, the right hon. Gentleman had, on a recent occasion, given utterance to a sentiment which had fallen with ominous import on the ears of the farmers;—the right hon. Baronet, in a speech in this House, had said—"The prosperity of manufactures is a greater support than any Corn Law!" I have lately seen, in a series of letters on the Corn Laws, in the *Morning Post*, written by a gentleman of great acknowledged commercial celebrity, one who I doubt not, would be considered a high authority by the right hon. Baronet—I mean, Mr. Gladstone, a near relation of the hon. Members for Walsall and for Newark, who, taking the same views as the right hon. Baronet, in reference so a sliding scale, suggests in last Friday's paper, possibly as a feeler, a sliding scale, of which the pivot should be lowered 8s.; that is, that the alteration he would suggest in the present law, would be to reduce the pivot from 73s. to 65s. per quarter. Now, I will not trouble the House with a column of figures, but comparing the present scale with that proposed by Mr. Gladstone, and taking the present average of wheat at 63s. per quarter, the result would be, that instead of the present duty of 23s. 8d., it would, under Mr. Gladstone's proposition, be reduced to 6s. 8d., or 1s. 4d. below the extremely low duty proposed by her Majesty's Ministers. Is this, I ask the right hon. Baronet, the pivot which he is disposed to adopt? Is it to be 73s. or 65s., or between or below? Before the right hon. Baronet asks me for my confidence, he is bound to declare himself upon these points. Should he not satisfy me upon these matters of detail, I will beg to ask him one plain and simple question—one that will be perfectly intelligible out of doors—one that admits of no mistake. "Will he or will he not continue to the farmer the amount of protection which he now enjoys?" This will be readily answered by a simple "yes," or "no." At all events, if the right hon. Baronet does not think fit to favour me with an answer, his silence will furnish me with an inference; but if he do not answer it, farewell to his claim to candour, which will no longer deceive the farmers of England. Let the right hon. Baronet show the grounds upon which he claims their confidence. I ask no more; I am willing to discuss this question here or on the hustings with the right hon. Baronet, on that

plain intelligible question. All the petitions I have presented, and all that I now hold, including the one emanating from the largest meeting ever held in my division of the country, attended as it was by gentlemen of the highest influence and consideration, contains this prayer and this only—"That there be no alteration in the existing Corn-laws." I, therefore, ask the right hon. Baronet what answer I am to return on his behalf, at all events, to the prayer of my constituents? The right hon. Baronet, with great professions of candour, took credit in his speech, on introducing his resolution, for having never concealed his opinions on what he denominated the great constitutional questions of the Ballot, the extension of the suffrage, and the duration of Parliaments. I do not remember, that the right hon. Baronet committed himself to an opinion on the People's Charter; that might probably have been a direct violation of the treaty of Nottingham. It might have exhibited a further proof of that time-serving alliance which was said to have been entered into on that occasion, and of which the right hon. Baronet had so much reason to be proud. But, Sir, are there no other questions involving my consistency, and on which I have often recorded my opinions, which I am now called upon to censure and disavow, if tempted by the resolution with which the right hon. Baronet has baited his political rat-trap? Are there no questions of the reform of abuses, no questions involving the great principles of civil and religious liberty, on which I have been opposed to the right hon. Baronet, and which he now calls upon me to desert and repudiate, in favour of his skeleton Corn-law, and its unmentionable pivot. Am I, because the right hon. Baronet offers me this sliding scale, with a mysterious silence as to its details—am I, who voted for the 5*l.* franchise, in the Irish Registration Bill of the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, in preference to the 8*l.*, and who, if I had had the opportunity, would have voted for the 40*s.* freehold qualification, both because I think it more intelligible than the franchise founded on "solvent tenant tests," and "beneficial interests," which, I confess, exceeded my humble comprehension, and still more, because it, at least, approached to a nearer assimilation to the English franchise, to which I think Ireland entitled—am I, in a word, to recant

my support of the bill of the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, and adopt the disfranchising bill of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, because, forsooth, the right hon. Baronet offers me a sliding scale, with its uncalculated and incalculable details. My right hon. Friend, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, has anticipated me on a topic near and dear to my heart—a subject not inferior to the great question of the Corn-laws itself—namely, how the right hon. Baronet proposes to govern Ireland? That country which, with its centuries of misrule, forms the foulest blot on the page of English history—that country, in which, from the period when a Minister was to be enriched—a favourite advanced—a traitor rewarded—confiscation formed the never-failing source from which the avarice of their rulers was to be satisfied—that country, which, in later days, had its grievances still unredressed—how, I ask, does the right hon. Baronet propose to govern it? As a sister kingdom or a conquered province? Is it to be handed over as a land of aliens in blood, in language, and religion, to its bitterest foes? [*Oh, oh.*] Hon. Members may taunt that quotation; but in my opinion the Irishman, who forgets that savage and insulting speech, deserves himself to be forgotten in the hour of his need. Sir, the right hon. Baronet has, it appears to me, framed his resolution for the purpose of embarrassing Gentlemen placed in my situation. His political tactics are probably good, but I cannot admire his gratitude. On the question of the sugar duties, I gave the right hon. Baronet my vote, to the probably fatal defeat of my own friends. I did so on principle. I felt I owed a duty to my constituents, and to my own consistency; and I honestly discharged it at all risks. Sir, I have also a duty I owe myself, not to desert those principles which I have maintained in common with her Majesty's Ministers, since the passing of the Reform Act—not to censure in them the measures I have myself supported. I fear I have already been somewhat troublesome in the many questions I have put to the right hon. Baronet; but I will venture to ask him one more. Would he not himself despise me if I allowed myself to fall into the trap he has so skilfully set? If I now quarrelled on one point with the friends I have so long supported, and turned round upon them, and on all those

measures, in which I had concurred with them; in a word, if I crossed over the floor of this House, and sat myself down beside him, as a Tory, for the rest of my life? I beg pardon, I will not press for an answer, it might be personally offensive to the right hon. Baronet's noble and right hon. Friends who sit near him. I am quite willing to look upon them as a warning, not as an example. I am not prepared to turn round upon my principles—I neither admire the treachery of deserting them, nor approve such acts.

Debate again adjourned.

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.]** Sir J. Y. Buller moved the second reading of the Municipal Corporations Bill, which related to the rating of municipal property in or belonging to the city of Exeter.

Mr. Divett moved, that the bill be read a second time this day three months.

The House divided on the original question:—Ayes 93, Noes 20: Majority 73.

#### List of the AYES.

A'Court, Captain	Heneage, E.
Aglionby, H. A.	Hobhouse, T. B.
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.	Holmes, hon. W.
Blackburne, I.	A'Court
Blake, M. J.	Holmes, W.
Blennerhassett, A.	Hope, hon. C.
Bolling, W.	Hope, G. W.
Broadley, H.	Horsman, E.
Brotherton, J.	Howard, P. H.
Bruges, W. H. L.	Hughes, W. B.
Buck, L. W.	Hurt, F.
Burr, H.	Irton, S.
Buller, C.	Jackson, Mr. Serjeant
Campbell, Sir J.	Jones, J.
Cole, hon. A. H.	Kemble, H.
Compton, H. C.	Langdale, hon. C.
Courtenay, P.	Lincoln, Earl of
Cresswell, C.	Mackenzie, W. F.
Dugdale, W. S.	Maclean, D.
Duncan, Viscount	Monypenny, T. G.
Dundas, D.	Morgan, C. M.
Eaton, R. J.	Muskett, G. A.
Egerton, W. T.	Norreys, Sir D. J.
Egerton, Sir P.	Packe, C. W.
Elliot, hon. J. E.	Palmerston, Viscount
Ewart, W.	Parker, R. T.
Farnham, E. B.	Patten, J. W.
Fielden, W.	Perceval, Colonel
Ferguson, Sir R. A.	Philips, M.
Filmer, Sir E.	Philips, G. R.
Fleetwood, Sir P. H.	Pigot, right hon. D.
Goulburn, rt hon. H.	Pigot, R.
Grattan, J.	Plumptre, J. P.
Greene, T.	Pringle, A.
Greg, R. H.	Rushbrooke, Colonel
Greig, D.	Rutherford, rt. hn. A.
Handley, H.	Scarlett, hon. J. Y.
Hawes, B.	Seymour, Lord



Somerville, Sir W. M. Wilbraham, G.  
 Stanley, hon. E. J. Wilbraham, hon. B.  
 Stewart, J. Wilmot, Sir J. E.  
 Talbot, C. R. M. Wodehouse, E.  
 Thesiger, F. Wood, B.  
 Trotter, J. Worsley, Lord  
 Turner, W. Wyse, T.  
 Vivian, rt. hn. Sir R. H.  
 Wakley, T.  
 Walker, R.  
 Westenra, hon. H. R.

TELLERS.

Buller, Sir J. Y.  
 Grimsditch, T.

*List of the NOES.*

Ainsworth, P. Pechell, Captain  
 Beamish, F. B. Salwey, Colonel  
 Bellow, R. M. Stansfield, W. R. C.  
 Childers, J. W. Strutt, E.  
 Douglas, Sir C. E. Thornely, T.  
 Evans, W. Williams, W.  
 Heron, Sir R. Wood, G. W.  
 Marshall, W. Wrightson, W. B.  
 Marsland, H.  
 Maule, hon. F.  
 Morris, D.  
 Parker, J.

TELLERS.

Divett, E.  
 Follett, Sir W.

Bill read a second time.

**COPYHOLD AND CUSTOMARY TENURE.]** Mr. Hope moved the third reading of the Copyhold and Customary Tenure Bill.

Mr. Goulburn moved the adjournment of the debate, as at that late hour, it could not be properly discussed.

Mr. Aglionby strongly supported the motion. The bill had been twice committed, and its provisions fully discussed, and he thought it ought not to be further delayed.

Mr. Goulburn asked for a short delay, on the ground of the amount of property touched by the bill, and because the right hon. Member for Ripon, who was not in his place, had various objections to it. The right hon. Gentleman moved the adjournment of the debate.

The House divided on the question of adjournment:—Ayes 17, Noes 72: Majority 55.

*List of the AYES.*

Bolling, W. Jones, J.  
 Brotherton, J. Lincoln, Earl of  
 Courtenay, P. Mackenzie, W. F.  
 Douglas, Sir C. E. Packe, C. W.  
 Egerton, W. T. Perceval, Colonel  
 Feilden, W. Pringle, A.  
 Filmer, Sir E. Rushbrooke, Colonel  
 Grimsditch, T.  
 Irton, S.  
 Jackson, Mr. Serj.

TELLERS.

Goulburn, rt. hon. H.  
 Sibthorp, Colonel

*List of the NOES.*

Aglionby, H. A. Ainsworth, P.

Baring, rt. hon. F. T. Morgan, C. M.  
 Beamish, F. B. Morris, D.  
 Blackburne, I. Norreys, Sir D. J.  
 Broadley, H. Parker, J.  
 Bruges, W. H. L. Parker, R. T.  
 Buller, C. Patten, J. W.  
 Buller, Sir J. Y. Pechell, Captain  
 Burr, H. Philips, M.  
 Campbell, Sir J. Pigot, rt. hon. D.  
 Childers, J. W. Plumptre, J. P.  
 Cole, hon. A. H. Rutherford, rt. hn. A.  
 Compton, H. C. Salwey, Colonel  
 Divett, E. Seymour, Lord  
 Dugdale, W. S. Smith, R. V.  
 Dundas, D. Stanley, hon. E. J.  
 Egerton, Sir P. Stansfield, W. R. C.  
 Elliot, hon. J. E. Strutt, E.  
 Evans, W. Thornely, T.  
 Ewart, W. Trotter, J.  
 Ferguson, Sir R. A. Turner, W.  
 Fleetwood, Sir P. H. Vivian, rt. hn. Sir R. H.  
 Greene, T. Wakley, T.  
 Greg, R. H. Walker, R.  
 Greig, D. Warburton, H.  
 Hawes, B. Westenra, hon. H. R.  
 Hobhouse, T. B. Wilbraham, hon. B.  
 Hope, hon. C. Williams, W.  
 Howard, P. H. Wilmot, Sir J. E.  
 Hughes, W. B. Wodehouse, E.  
 Hurt, F. Wood, G. W.  
 Kemble, H. Wood, B.  
 Langdale, hon. C. Worsley, Lord  
 Maule, D. Wrightson, W. B.  
 Marshall, W.  
 Maule, hon. F.  
 Mildmay, P. St. J.  
 Monypenny, T. G.

TELLERS.

Hope, G. W.  
 Stewart, J.

The question was again put, that the bill be read a third time, when it was moved that the House do adjourn.

The House divided:—Ayes 8, Noes 57: Majority 49.

*List of the AYES.*

Brotherton, J. Perceval, Colonel  
 Filmer, Sir E. Rushbrooke, Colonel  
 Goulburn, rt. hn. H.  
 Jackson, Mr. Serjeant  
 Lincoln, Earl of  
 Packe, C. W.

TELLERS.

Mackenzie, W. F.  
 Sibthorp, Colonel

*List of the NOES.*

Aglionby, H. A. Ferguson, Sir R. A.  
 Ainsworth, P. Fleetwood, Sir P. H.  
 Beamish, F. B. Greene, T.  
 Broadley, H. Greg, R. H.  
 Bruges, W. H. L. Hawes, B.  
 Buller, C. Hobhouse, T. B.  
 Buller, Sir J. Y. Hope, hon. C.  
 Campbell, Sir J. Howard, P. H.  
 Divett, E. Hughes, W. B.  
 Dundas, D. Hurt, F.  
 Egerton, Sir P. Jones, J.  
 Elliot, hon. J. E. Kemble, H.  
 Evans, W. Langdale, hon. C.  
 Ewart, W. Marshall, W.

Maule, hon. F.	Strutt, E.
Morris, D.	Thornely, T.
Norreys, Sir D. J.	Trotter, J.
Parker, J.	Vivian, rt. hn. Sir R. H.
Parker, R. T.	Wakley, T.
Pechell, Captain	Warburton, H.
Philips, M.	Westonra, hon. H. R.
Pigot, rt. hn. D.	Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Plumptre, J. P.	Wodehouse, E.
Rutherford, rt. hn. A.	Wood, G. W.
Salwey, Colonel	Wood, B.
Seymour, Lord	Worsley, Lord
Smith, R. V.	Wrightson, W. B.
Somerville, Sir W. M.	TELLERS.
Stanley, hon. E. J.	Hope, G. W.
Stansfield, W. R. C.	Stewart, J.

It was ultimately arranged, that the third reading should be postponed until the following evening.  
Adjourned.

### HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, June 3, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a first time:—Sewers; Militia Ballots Suspension; Turnpike Roads; Court Houses (Ireland); Stamp Duties; Law Proceedings; Madhouses (Scotland); Ordnance Survey.

**Petitions presented.** By the Duke of Wellington, the Earl of Winchilles, the Earl of Warwick, Lord Beaumont, the Earl of Harewood, the Duke of Buccleugh, and other noble Lords, from Somerset, Norfolk, Hampshire, Canterbury, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, and other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Rosebery, Earl Fitzwilliam, the Earl of Lichfield, Lord Portman, and other noble Lords, from Stirling, Great Yarmouth, Dundee, Hastings, Stroud, Birmingham, and other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Duke of Rutland, from Leicester in favour of Church Rates.—By Lord Portman, from a place in Staffordshire, for the Abolition of Church Rates.

**ARMS (IRELAND).]** Viscount *Duncannon* having moved the Order of the Day for considering the objections of the Commons to the amendments made by their Lordships in this bill, briefly stated the import of those amendments to be this—that by the insertion of the word “and” for “or,” it rendered it necessary to apply for a license to keep arms, both to the clerk of petty sessions, and to the quarter sessions also. This it was considered would lead to great inconvenience and unnecessary annoyance, and the House of Commons had, consequently, refused to concur in these amendments. What he had now to do was to move that their Lordships should not insist upon their amendments.

The Earl of *Charleville* said that although he believed, from information he had received, that the precaution proposed by the amendments was a very necessary

one, in the present state of Ireland, yet he should not press their Lordships to adhere to those amendments, on the present occasion, as their so doing might lead to the loss of the bill.

Motion agreed to.

**Jews' DECLARATION.]** The Marquess of *Bute*, in moving the second reading of this bill, said that its object was to enable persons belonging to the Jewish persuasion to hold those municipal offices to which they might be elected by their fellow-citizens. Before the Municipal Corporations Bill, Jews were not excluded from the office of commissioner of lighting, paving, &c., in the different boroughs, but by a clause in that bill they were excluded from all the town council. Now, the duties which a commissioner had to perform were the same as those of a town councillor, and therefore he was quite at a loss to understand why any distinction was made; but he thought he could put the case of the Jews on a higher ground. They were all aware that many of the Dissenters in this country not only refused to pay church rates but also to pay tithes. But the Jews had always behaved in a very different manner towards the Established Church; and, if the question were between the Jews and the Dissenters, he should say that the Jews had on that ground a prior claim to the indulgence of Parliament. The present state of the law was such that it could be evaded by any of these parties at any time, and on those grounds, therefore, he moved that the bill be read a second time.

The Archbishop of *Canterbury* said that it was always with pain he opposed any measure the object of which was to relieve any portion of her Majesty's subjects from disabilities under which they laboured. The noble Marquess had made use of one argument to which he (the Archbishop of Canterbury) must say he attached no weight. The noble Marquess said that, whilst many Dissenters were violent in their attacks on the Established Church, no such violence had been exhibited by the Jews. He fully admitted that. Some Dissenters might have used strong, he might say offensive, expressions towards the Establishment, but they were Christians, and it was not the feelings or character of individuals on a question of this sort to which he would refer, but the opinions which they professedly held. He

said nothing against the character of the Jews as a nation—his objection was only to their religion—a religion which was essentially and decidedly hostile to the faith of Christ, and which was founded on the supposition that that faith was a tissue of fraud and imposture. This was a first attempt, but if successful it would tend to the admission of Jews to Parliament, and, if they took part in framing and administering our laws, we should no longer be an exclusively Christian country. He entertained no uncharitable feelings towards the Jews. It would be unchristian in him to do so, and he would be happy to see all the Powers of Europe uniting to ameliorate the condition of both Jews and Christians in the Ottoman dominions. This bill might satisfy the ambitious view of a few individuals, but it could not increase the comfort or happiness of the great portion of the Jewish people. For these reasons he felt himself bound to propose that this bill be read a second time this day six months.

The Marquess of *Bute* said that his motive in supporting this measure was certainly not to gratify the ambitious views of any individuals, but from a sincere conviction that the Jewish people ought to be relieved from the stigma now attached to them.

Their Lordships divided:—Contents Present 25; Proxies 23:—48. Not Contents Present 23; Proxies 24:—47. Majority 1.

Bill read a second time.

Adjourned.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, June 3, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Ecclesiastical Commissioners. — Read a third time:—Assessed Taxes Commission.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Childers, Colonel Langton, Mr. Pease, Mr. Evans, Mr. Raikes Currie, Mr. Villiers, Sir E. Wilmot, Sir R. Hill, Mr. Scholefield, Mr. Wynn Ellis, Mr. Hume, and several other hon. Members, from Buckingham, Barnard Castle, Derbyshire, Stafford, Warwickshire, Shropshire, Birmingham, various places in Leicestershire, and a great many other places, for an Alteration or Repeal of the Corn-laws.

CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTRY—  
ADJOURNED DEBATE. (FOURTH DAY).] The Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned debate having been read,

Mr. *Colquhoun* was sorry he did not see the hon. Member for Lincolnshire in his place, for after the phials of wrath which he had poured out upon his right

hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, it was impossible that he should not advert to his extraordinary speech. Extraordinary it appeared to him under all the circumstances, but more extraordinary, because, since he had come into that House, an hon. Friend had put into his hand a record of the votes given by that hon. Member whilst he occupied a Tory nomination borough. He found this hon. Gentleman so eloquent on the subject of Ireland, voting again and again against the Catholic claims, and there was only one speech of this hon. Gentleman, who could not bear to tear himself from the side of the Reformers—the only speech of the hon. Member for Lincolnshire which he found recorded was a speech of the 28th of February, 1822, in which he denounced with the utmost contempt the measure of Parliamentary reform. Then this hon. Gentleman said to his right hon. Friend —“ You have been true to party, but false to principle.” Yes; it was true, that there were men who did abandon the emoluments of place, and the connections which grew out of it, when a high and imperious principle demanded the sacrifice. He would ask the hon. Gentleman what he thought of those who, on a very vital question, proved true to party, and a party to which they had very recently attached themselves, but false to their principles? The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, in that earnest and eloquent speech which he delivered last night had said, that party connections were of the greatest value in order to carry great principles. But what should they say of those hon. Members who, when their most valuable principles were, by their own confessions, assailed by the Government, still continued their support to Government? The hon. Member for Lincolnshire (Mr. Handley) was very anxious on the subject of the Corn-laws. He would not enter into the hon. Gentleman's fears upon the question. He did not think the revision of the Corn-laws was at all inadvisable; but he was surprised when the hon. Gentleman declared, that according to the great principles of his political creed, he would support the Government on a motion of vote of confidence in the Government. The hon. Member for Lincolnshire said last night he put himself forward as the representative of the heavy agricultural party of the county of Lincoln. He did not know whe-

ther the hon. Gentleman was qualified to be such, but it did strike him that he was better qualified to serve in a squadron which some long time ago was called by a very curious name, the *squadronne volantes* who figured in the Scotch Parliament at the time of the union. They were at the same time friends of both parties, giving their votes on an emergency when the balance of parties required it—giving their votes sometimes to one party and sometimes to another, securing the confidence of neither; welcomed by both when they came to them, but trusted by none, and at last, when the emergency had passed away that made the assistance looked for, distrusted by all, condemned by the public, and repudiated by both parties. He did not see the Judge Advocate in his place. He turned to his speech with great satisfaction, because it was a speech characterised by honesty of intention and by great ability; but he confessed, that his right hon. Friend had put forward some opinions which rather surprised him. When his right hon. Friend said he wanted to know what were the grounds upon which the Conservative side of the House sought for the public confidence—what measures they had brought forward which seemed deserving of such confidence—when his right hon. Friend put forward such questions, he (Mr. Colquhoun) was indeed surprised. He thought it a most extraordinary question to put to an opposition, and if the right hon. Gentleman would read the annals of parliamentary warfare, he would find, that it was not the duty of the opposition to tell on what grounds they claimed public confidence. But he (Mr. Colquhoun) would briefly refer to some of the measures which he had passed through the instrumentality of the opposition side of the House. When the Jamaica Bill was brought forward, was it not the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, who had concocted it? Was not the Canada Bill, was not the Elections Committee Bill, was not the Irish Tithe Bill, was not the Irish Municipal Bill, passed through the instrumentality of the right hon. Baronet? He confessed, that one proposition laid down by his right hon. Friend surprised him. He said, that the proposition which they maintained was, that a Government unable to proceed with measures which they deemed important for the public interest should resign upon the first defeat. He

(Mr. Colquhoun) looked across the House, for he thought he must find there a Government just entered upon office, but instead of that he found a Government that had been in office six years, and had brought forward measures on which the House had expressed their opinion, yet they were told they were unable to pronounce whether the Government were or were not worthy of the confidence of that House. But the next proposition of the right hon. Gentleman was, that if they could not carry measures necessary for the public service, it was their duty to resign or dissolve. If that was true in 1841 it was true also in preceding years. Why, then, did not Government act upon it in 1838, when a great measure affecting the Irish Church was negatived? Why did they not act upon it in 1839, when they were defeated on the Canada and Jamaica measures? Why did they not act upon it in 1840, when they were twelve times soundly beaten on most important question? Why did they not, on these occasions, resign their offices, or appeal to the country? Oh, but the noble Lord opposite said, this was a special case; it was a special case of finance; but he (Mr. Colquhoun) was afraid if it had not been for the motion of the right hon. Baronet, that special case would have been made a general one. For, after all their beatings, on questions, too, of the utmost importance, their motto still seemed to be, "*Tu pulsas ego vapulo tantum*," which he would freely translate thus,—“Thrash us as you will, expose us as you please, roll us in the dirt, trample under foot our measures, expose us to the contempt and obloquy of the country as you may, only leave us office; we will cling to it even without power; for it we will abandon all our principles, and trust you to manage the policy of the country.” His right hon. Friend, the Judge Advocate, talked very loudly last night about a dissolution, and stated, that they on that side of the House were prepared for a dissolution. It was true, that on that side of the House they had dared her Majesty's present Government to a dissolution, but until the present time they had feared to meet the people. The right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, had referred to the precedent of Mr. Pitt. He could recollect the time when the ex-Member for Westminster would have denounced Mr. Pitt. But now such was the nakedness

of his argument, that he was obliged to refer to Mr. Pitt's words. He would now allude to the statements of the man of very different principles to Mr. Pitt; he alluded to M. Fox. After quoting from the speech of Mr. Fox, in 1784, the hon. Member begged to ask whether, upon the showing of Mr. Fox, the present Ministers were justified in keeping their places ever since 1838, from which time they had been unable to pass any one approved measure. He would ask them whether they considered such tenacity to office was consistent with their duty; if they could not conduct the business of the country in that House it was their duty to appeal to the people, either by a dissolution, or in some other manner. But in all these references to the times and conduct of Mr. Pitt, it is to be remembered that Minister's situation was very different from that of her Majesty's Government. Mr. Pitt was possessed of the undoubted confidence of the Crown, and he believed he had that of the people, and in that belief he was fully justified, for when a general election took place, he was supported by a large majority. Now, had the Ministers possessed, did they believe they possessed the confidence of the people since the year 1838? No; in defiance of the well-known opinions of the people out of doors, and in the face of those in that House, whose confidence they did not possess, they maintained their places. He would ask in what more dangerous position could they place the Crown. They maintained office without the power of carrying a single measure which they deemed essential to the welfare of the country. Now, although he was well aware, that the loyalty of the people was not to be shaken; that it was indomitable, still he contended, that they were placing the Crown in a most dangerous and most difficult position. The right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, had been indignant with the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, because he had called the Government an oscillating one; and he said, was it an oscillating Government which had carried so many measures which he enumerated? The policy pursued by the Government was, that of throwing themselves to the right and then to the left, in order to adjust the balance of power. That was their only resource, under the very skilful guidance of the noble Lord. The Government, for in-

stance, appealed at one time to the sympathies of such men as the hon. Member for Shrewsbury and others, sincere friends of the Church, and at another time to Gentlemen, such as the hon. Member for Lambeth and others, who advocated the voluntary system. Now how, he would ask, could any straightford Ministry continue to follow up such a line of policy? In 1836 the noble Lord opposite supported some Church and Conservative measures, and the noble Lord then opposed the motion for expelling the Bishops from the House of Lords. A similar course was pursued in 1837 and 1838. In 1839 the scheme of national education was brought forward for the purpose of redressing the balance. It was the same on subjects of general policy. In 1836, the Canada question was deferred, from an apprehension of displeasing the extreme Liberal party; but in 1838, certain measures were adopted in regard to Canada, which led to a defection in the Ministerial ranks. In 1839, however, when the Government, who had been defeated on the Jamaica question, again returned to power, they thought it proper to take some step for the purpose of satisfying the extreme party, and the ballot was accordingly made an open question. That system of compromise went on. In 1840, precisely the same system was pursued. There was a declaration by the hon. Under-Secretary of State, of attachment to the Scotch Church, which was re-echoed by the Lord Advocate, but when a proposition was brought forward to support the Church, down came the voluntary principle men and the Dissenters, declaring, that if such a measure were proposed they would withdraw their support from the Government, and thus everything was obliged to yield to the system of compromise? How had it affected their finance? The same system had obliged them to pass the penny postage—a good measure in itself, but brought forward at a time when they were in circumstances of great difficulty, and when there was no justification for it. The hon. and learned Member for Reading had said, that it was not material to the question in what state the finance of the country were left in the hands of the Government. Now, he thought, that most material to the consideration of the question of whether the Government possess the confidence of that House. If they received the finances

in a flourishing condition, and left a bankrupt Exchequer—if they had a surplus of a million in 1836, and ended with a surplus expenditure in, he hoped, their last year of office, of 1,800,000*l.* did not this justify a vote of want of confidence. There was another proceeding in which he thought the Government was not justified. They had been cutting and carving out commissions, with what object he did not know. He could not tell the amount, but upwards of 800,000*l.* had been doled out among 800 Baronets, Majors in the army, ex-M.P's., lawyers of six years' standing, and other claimants for services rendered, in the shape of new commissions and appointments at home and in the colonies, in order to stop the mouths of clamorous partisans. Then, with regard to the foreign policy pursued by her Majesty's Government, had that been conducted in a manner beneficial to the commercial interests of this country? Complaints had been lodged against the Government on the score of their foreign policy, not merely by Members on the Opposition side of the House, but by Liberal Members, by the hon. Members for Lambeth, for Manchester, Lancaster, the Tower Hamlets, and others. Upon all these grounds, he must say, that he possessed no confidence in her Majesty's Government, and therefore he felt bound to vote for the motion of the right hon. Baronet. It was clear, that they had no power to carry any one measure which they brought forward. But, finding that they were in a falling state, they had all at once become the clamorous advocates of principles which they had hitherto neglected to enforce. He called upon hon. Gentlemen who occupied the opposite benches, to bring to an end the present state of affairs, which was most dangerous and unsatisfactory, no business being done, no practical legislation being brought forward, and none of those schemes of reform and amendment being submitted to the House which were said to be so necessary for the public good. Let an appeal then be made to the country, so that a Government may be established possessing sufficient strength and ability to execute the public business of the country. That such would be the case he had very little doubt, for of the present Government he might say, as Mr. Burke once said—

“Maladministration has run its course;

there is not a move left on the board, the Government is checkmated.”

Mr. O'Connell said, he had three grounds of complaint against the hon. Member who had just sat down. In the first place, he had not read the resolution before the House; in the second place, he had taken an unfair liberty with the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, who was absent; and, thirdly, he had totally concealed his real antipathy to the present Ministry. The hon. Member could not have read the resolution, because there was not one word in it about the confidence of the country; it spoke only of the confidence of the House; and there was a great difference between the two points. The hon. Gentleman seemed to have taken a leaf out of the book of the gallant Member for Lincoln, for, like him, he had spoken of commission after commission, exactly as the gallant Member was in the habit of doing. But as to the sincerity of the motives of the hon. Member in thus attacking the Government, he believed it to be grounded in the fact, that the present Ministry had thrown off the shackles of bigotry, and had endeavoured to respect the religious feelings of all her Majesty's subjects, and to do full justice to them. The hon. Member had attacked the hon. Member for Lincoln in strong terms, accusing him of inconsistency. If his recollection did not deceive him, there was once a Member for Kilmarnock, who advocated the Reform Bill, and appeared favourable to Radicalism; yet he was now found on the opposite benches, the ardent friend of that party which was opposed to the Reform Bill throughout. Was the hon. Member, then, the person to charge others with political inconsistency? If he were not mistaken, there were still greater charges alleged against the hon. Gentleman, but upon that he would not enter on the present occasion. There was an attempt by the variegated party opposite to seize the reins of Government. That was their object. But the House would not be led away by special pleading on the histories of past Government. No attempt of the kind had ever been made with greater political courage. He believed it had the full merit of great political courage; he would not call it a noble daring, because the purity of that daring would depend upon the object of the attempt, and the manner of executing it. The question before the House should be debated upon

the claims of the present Opposition to hold the reins of Government. The Opposition had to establish, that their principles were those upon which the Administration of the country ought to be conducted, and those which the House ought to sanction. But they had been exceedingly cautious upon that head. They had not told the House what they would do for the country if they got into power; they had totally refrained from committing themselves to any system of political government for this country. Not one word had dropped from the right hon. Baronet to show the way in which he intended to administer the affairs of the country, or how he would alter the present foreign policy; he was totally silent upon that subject. Not one word had been spoken throughout the debate by any single Member of the Opposition which would tend to give the slightest information upon that important question. Neither had any hon. Gentleman who had addressed the House from the Opposition benches, succeeded in impeaching any one of the proceedings of her Majesty's Government. [*Hear, hear.*] Could the hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition benches have done better with regard to foreign policy? Could they have been more successful in China and in India? Could they have established a better system of colonial government? Peace and tranquillity reigned in all the colonies, and the great and majestic experiment of liberating 800,000 human beings had succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations of its warmest promoters. At home many abuses had been rectified, many grievances ameliorated, and many useful measures of essential benefit to the country carried into operation by the present Government. He, therefore, felt bound to support them, and he called upon the House to support them. What was there to call for a change of the Administration? It was not to be found in the foreign policy, nor in the colonial policy, nor in the management of the affairs of England; nor, above all, was there to be found in the administration of the affairs of Ireland any reason for a change of the Ministry. In England, her Majesty's Government had maintained order and peace in the time of turbulence and public commotion. They had vindicated the law, they had punished the delinquents, they had established public tranquillity, and removed even the slight-

est apprehension of its being disturbed. That had been their policy in England. What had been their policy in Ireland? Were he to describe it in one word, he should say, that they had done justice to the country as far as they could. He knew there were those who would heap iniquity upon the country, and they were the first to sneer at the notion of justice being done to it. Yes, he would defy any man to look at home, and to look at Ireland, and to point out any period during which any Government had conducted itself towards that country as the present Administration had. When was there a period when the interests of party had not been preferred to those of the people, when faction did not prosper at the expense of the country, and when the rights of the few were not maintained to the neglect of those of the many? But there was no such instance in the history of the present Administration, though they had not been able, indeed, to effect all they would have done. The hon. Gentleman who spoke last, notwithstanding his care to avoid touching upon the mode in which the Opposition would wish to govern Ireland, let slip an expression which was a sufficient key to it. He said, the Municipal Corporations Bill had been corrected by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and his party. That was the way they would act towards Ireland, depriving the people of the franchise, and limiting their municipal and national rights, and, under the pretence of perfecting legislation, inflict additional abuses. But did they think the people of Ireland would submit to such insults? The right hon. Baronet might have corrected the Municipal Reform Bill, but it was in an adverse sense. The correction, as it was called, marked the disposition in which the right hon. Baronet and his party would govern Ireland, if they were in power. The hon. Gentleman had declared, that the Government did not possess a majority in that House. They did possess a majority once. But how had they lost it? Had they not lost it by liberal candidates being beaten at the several isolated elections which had taken place of late? And did not everyone know, that in every one of those cases the most palpable and disgraceful bribery had been exercised to produce the result [*No.*] He repeated the accusation, and he would assert, moreover, that other instrumental-

ities had been brought into operation to procure the return of Members to strengthen the ranks of the Opposition. That which hon. Gentlemen opposite called a proof of public confidence was a proof only of the corruption of the constituencies and the degradation of public morals. If the franchise were extended, and the ballot given to the electors, that bribery and corruption, which was now so rife, would be at an end. But what chance had the country, if hon. Gentlemen opposite came into power of obtaining an extension of the franchise, or the protection of the ballot? What measures that would benefit the country were likely to come from them? They would make the franchise more restricted, if they could, and they certainly would take care to withhold the ballot. If this country had nothing to expect from them what would be the state of Ireland? The plausible hypocrisy of legislation would be of no avail there; the people of Ireland were convinced of the wickedness of that faction which had so long oppressed them, and of the pernicious impolicy of their measures. The noble Lord opposite had no reason to boast of the success of his Irish measures. He had prophesied to the noble Lord some years ago, that the tithe rent charge would double the amount of disturbance in Ireland, and now he could tell him, that discontent on that subject was spreading far and wide. Within the last few years, there had been fewer agrarian outrages in Ireland, than at any former period of its history, and the consequence was, that the landlords and in-coming tenants, finding themselves in a state of security, clearances had been going on in every quarter, wretches had been ejected from their cottages and small holdings, and numbers of them driven out of the country or reduced to starve in the ditches. These horrors had accumulated till the hideous reaction of crime had created terror on the other side. Within the last fortnight, two of the most horrid murders ever known in Ireland, had been committed from this cause. They had not been committed on unpopular persons, who had taken a decided part against the interests or feelings of the people. No, on the contrary, the unfortunate objects of them had been decided supporters of popular principles—he alluded to the cases of Mr. Hall and Mr. Butler Bryan. If the party opposite came into power, and the magis-

trates and the bench were filled up with decided partisans, with partisan juries to back them—if the people saw every place of authority occupied by their enemies—hon. Gentlemen opposite might treat his assertion with lightness or scorn—but the consequences which would ensue had already been written in characters of blood in the history of Ireland, and would again be written in still darker characters, if the Government were changed to unlimited despotism. The right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir R. Peel) had been five years Secretary for Ireland, and had had some experience in the system which his party pursued in that country. The right hon. Baronet's predecessor had repealed the Insurrection Act on the ground of the increased tranquillity of the country, but he was not two years in office till he came down to the House and asked for three coercion bills, the Peace Preservation Bill, the Assaults Punishment Bill, and the Insurrection Act. These bills were enforced during by far the greater part of the time, that the right hon. Baronet was Secretary for Ireland, and the liberties of the people were annulled. Twenty counties were in a state of disturbance when the right hon. Baronet had applied for those acts, after having proclaimed himself the champion of Orangism; he was the first man who had become the eulogist of the Orangemen. The right hon. Baronet was fond of looking into *Hansard*; if he would refer to the debate of 18th July, 1814, the right hon. Baronet would see, that he had given a historical account of the rise and progress of Orangism, which must have arisen from misapprehension on his part, for it was a gross misapprehension. The right hon. Baronet ended his speech with these words:—

“So far from the Orange Society being liable to the imputations cast upon them, their only fault was the exuberance of loyalty.”

Was this, then, the man to whom was to be entrusted the Government of Ireland? When the right hon. Baronet recollected that the Orange societies had been condemned by an unanimous vote of the House of Commons, could he still believe that their only fault was an exuberance of loyalty. He remembered the right hon. Baronet's administration while he was Secretary for Ireland. What was the state of the country at that time? Was there any man appointed to the magistracy, or



office of any kind, who had not the shibboleth of the Orange party? No. Every office was filled by the members of one church, and by adherents of the Government of the day. Then it was, that, while going circuit, the Attorney-general ordered the Chief Justice to call the country gentlemen into his private chamber, and to argue with them against Catholic emancipation. During that period, the whole of the county magistracy was selected from the ranks of the Orangemen. What step did the right hon. Baronet take when he formed a yeomanry corps in Ireland? Out of the 32,000 which constituted that body, 19,000 were drawn out of the province of Ulster. What had been the consequences? Scarcely a year passed, up to 1829, in which several persons had not been shot at the annual Orange demonstrations; sometimes four, and never less than two persons, fell annually victims to that horrible society. The same spirit was still in existence. The House would be surprised to hear, that the Orangemen in the north of Ireland had opposed the temperance movement—they had thrown stones and broken the windows of the House in which men who had taken the temperance pledge had assembled to pass the evening in sobriety. The Catholic archbishop of the diocese, Dr. Croke, had warned Father Matthew not to visit it until he knew whether the Orange party would tolerate the temperance movement. Then again with respect to the conduct of the judges appointed by a Tory Government and those appointed by the present administration. He believed that neither Sir Michael O'Loughlin, nor Baron Brady, appointed by the present Ministers, had ever attended political meetings. There were judges, however, in the north of Ireland who had not been so free from the spirit of party. Some of these judges had remained too long on the bench. One of them had not gone circuit for these three or four years; and though upwards of eighty years of age, he would not leave the bench, lest some lawyer favourable to the policy of the present Government should be appointed to his situation. What signified all the pretences of gentlemen opposite in favour of governing Ireland fairly, when they found that the persons whom they had appointed as judges were men who had not scrupled to say, that the oath of a Catholic was not entitled to the same weight as the oath of

a Protestant?—that the doctrine of Maynooth was, that no regard was to be paid to the sanctity of an oath? What benefit, he would ask, would ever Ireland derive from a Government who could appoint to Irish judicial situations persons who ventured to make assertions of this nature? Was that House prepared to inflict an evil of that description on the people of Ireland? They had been told that there was no reason to apprehend that the right hon. Baronet would inflict such an evil. But he would like to know how the right hon. Baronet could expect to be supported by his party, if he did not in his turn support his party by acceding to their views. Whatever might be the feelings of the right hon. Baronet in this respect, he did not think that the spirit of his party could be restrained whenever they had the power from acting on the policy which they had formerly pursued towards Ireland. They had now been out of place ten years—they had been stripped of power and plunder during that period; but this had only served to increase their malignity towards the people of Ireland, whose representatives had been the means of keeping them so long out of office, and there was now a greater disposition on the part of Gentlemen opposite to harass the people of Ireland than had ever before existed. Several Members in the course of the debate had alluded to the union of the Tories and Chartists. It was true that hon. Gentlemen opposite had the Chartists with them just now. Some said that that they had come forward voluntarily to support the Conservatives, while others thought that some substantial inducements had been held out for their support. He had seen a proclamation issued by their leader, Mr. O'Connor, from his prison-house, calling on the Chartists to support the Tories, and he did not deny that they had done so. But how long would the connection subsist should Gentlemen opposite come into power? Power was always unpopular, and when the Chartists found that Gentlemen opposite were opposed to every one of the principles for which they contended, did they imagine that there would be no disappointment, no heart-burnings on their part? Might not extreme measures be called for, might not their allies demand untaxed bread; if so, did hon. Gentlemen opposite flatter themselves with the hope that they should be

able to control the power with whom they were now leagued. During the recent agitation of the Chartists in England, and the disturbances in which it ended, he begged to remind the House that the people of Ireland had scorned their assistance and refused their aid. The tradesmen and operatives of Ireland expelled their leaders; they said to them, "You are physical force men, and we will have nothing to say to you." Ireland threw off the Chartists, and the Tories of England had courted and received their aid. The hon. Member for Nottingham could, perhaps, throw some light on this alliance, for he had certainly, on a recent occasion, obtained their support. Ireland scorned them, but Gentlemen opposite had welcomed them with courteous tones. What the consequence of their alliance might be he did not like to contemplate. If disappointment should arise, and disturbances again occur, would the Government of the right hon. Baronet ever venture to reduce by 10,000, the troops in Ireland? Would he not, on the contrary, be obliged to send over his tens of thousands to that unhappy country? Now, in regard to the recent measures of Government; they proposed to increase the revenue, and to relieve the distresses of the country by lessening taxation. How did hon. Gentlemen opposite meet that proposal? The right hon. Member for Cambridge said, let things go on as they have done. Did they mean to diminish taxation? Did they insist on keeping up the price of bread to the wretched artisan, in order that the aristocracy might command the luxuries of life? A noble Lord, in another place, had denounced the proposal of Government, because it would impose a tax on bread. The people would never bear it, said the noble Lord. Heaven help the noble Lord! He appeared to be a person of only one idea. His Lordship did not seem to consider the protecting duty a tax which went into the pockets of the landlord, but could only conceive that to be a tax which was paid into the public treasury. Did Gentlemen opposite, then, object to measures which had for their object the relief of the existing distress? Would they come forward as an administration, and insist that the present system should be continued?—that the people of England should rest content with less bread than they were entitled to? If this country admitted foreign corn, foreigners would be

obliged to take some articles in exchange, and the condition of all classes would thereby be benefitted. Did hon. Gentlemen opposite, then, refuse to enlarge the markets for the manufactures of this country? Did they refuse cheap bread and the opportunity to the working classes of obtaining high wages? Hon. Gentlemen opposite would not consent to the introduction of slave-grown sugar. They had arrived at a delicate period of their political existence. They had discovered that they were the great advocates of anti-slavery, without ever having known of this before. They had been slumbering hitherto, but now they were awake. He had never, however, received any encouragement from Gentlemen opposite when he had proposed to admit foreign sugar not the produce of slave labour. Gentlemen seemed amused at what he had stated, but he would take a wider range. Had they ever given the slightest hope that they would consent to the reduction of any of those unproductive duties which increased so enormously the price of various articles so necessary to the comfort of the people? The present Government were ready to diminish taxation, and thereby to increase the revenue. They were ready to give cheap bread, and to lessen the duties on other articles of great importance to the consumer. They were ready to enlarge the market for the produce of this country, in the hope that by doing so they would benefit all classes of the community. Let the right hon. Baronet opposite declare to the world the principles on which he meant to carry on his administration. How would he govern Ireland? After the recent attempts made by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, to narrow the franchise of the people of Ireland, the right hon. Baronet might find this no easy task. It was all very well for Gentlemen opposite to say, that was not the measure of the right hon. Baronet. It was all very well for them to put the right hon. Baronet forward as the decoy duck; but they knew that if the right hon. Baronet did not succumb to their party views, the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire was ready to their hands. If the right hon. Baronet failed, the noble Lord might succeed; he was the sweetener of their cup of life; he was the man who would redeem any failings in his leader, and lead his followers to the temple of peace and tranquillity; yes, he congratulated them on their resources,

but let them beware—the patience of the people of Ireland was nearly exhausted; they had a prospect of relief so long as the present administration remained in office, but they had no hope if Gentlemen opposite came into power, and that which they endured in the period of expectation became insufferable in moments of despair. He had, therefore, endeavoured to do his duty. He protested against the motion of the right hon. Baronet, believing that Ministers had done much to tranquillize Ireland, and to maintain the honour of this country in the estimation of the world.

Mr. *Lindsay* observed, that he felt that he had scarcely a right to intrude any observations of his own upon the House at that moment, but the fact was, he had risen for the purpose of offering an apology to the House for having so loudly expressed his denial of the accusation of bribery which had been made against those who had been successful in the recent elections against the Government. He begged to repeat this denial—and to assure the hon. and learned Member for Dublin that he had been altogether misinformed upon that subject. He would only add that, so far as the borough with which he had the honour to be connected was concerned; he believed he had had the satisfaction of being returned by the unbought suffrages of honest and independent electors—and it was a source of peculiar pleasure to him that one of the first votes he had been called upon to give, would be in support of the resolutions of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth.

Mr. *Sergeant Jackson*: Sir, the hon. and learned Member for Dublin, who has just resumed his seat, commenced his speech by making three charges against my hon. Friend, the Member for Kilmarnock (Mr. Colquhoun); the first of which was, that my hon. Friend had not read the resolution now before the House. I confess, Sir, it does appear to me somewhat strange, that the hon. and learned Member should have preferred such a charge against my hon. Friend, who, throughout his speech, did apply himself most ably, to the question under discussion, whilst the hon. and learned Member had not, in his rambling and discursive speech, of an hour's duration, addressed himself for a single moment, to either of the propositions involved in the resolution now before

the House. [*Oh! from Mr. O'Connell*]. Why! Will the hon. and learned Member be pleased to point out the single sentence in his speech, in which he combated the first proposition involved in the resolution proposed by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth; namely, "that her Majesty's Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons, to enable them to carry through the House, measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare?" This proposition has not even been denied by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin; nor has any Gentleman at this side of the House, throughout this protracted debate (with one single exception), ventured to deny it. Nay, its truth has been admitted by them all. Well! but will the hon. and learned Member tell me, what portion of his speech applied to the second branch of the question; viz. "that the continuance of those Ministers in office under such circumstances, is at variance with the spirit of the constitution?" Sir, I must in the next place, complain of the hon. and learned Gentleman, for the unfair manner in which he dealt with my right hon. Friend, the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn). Was it usual or parliamentary conduct for the hon. Member wilfully to repeat a misrepresentation of what had fallen during the debate from another hon. Member, sitting on the opposite side of the House? and that too, after the explanation of my right hon. Friend; and after another hon. Member had apologised for misunderstanding, and consequently mis-stating what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman? Next amongst his various irrelevant topics the hon. and learned Gentleman has spoken about the motion, of which he has given notice, for the admission of foreign sugar into this country, not the production of slave labour. The hon. and learned Member stands in rather an awkward position on this question, for he has committed himself at various meetings, as the uncompromising advocate for the abolition of slavery. Then a motion was brought forward by Ministers, which would have the effect of encouraging the slave-trade, when the hon. and learned Gentleman, anxious to maintain the Ministers in their places, and yet wishing to make it appear, that he was consistent in opposing the slave-trade, he, good-natured, simple-minded man, said he would propose a

clause in committee, by which sugar, the growth of free labour only, should be admitted into this country. Why, did not the hon. and learned Gentleman, at the very moment he gave that notice, know that this country was bound by treaty, under circumstances by which sugar, the growth of slave labour, could not be excluded? Nay, was he not told that such was the fact and the state of the law at the very time he gave his notice? And where was the hon. and learned Gentleman when the House went into Committee on the Sugar Duties' Bill, and when that question was under discussion? Was he in his place ready to propose his clause in committee, or was he at Manchester leading on his peaceful Temperance Society-men to the battle with the Chartists, thus giving the good people of Manchester a sample of our Irish tranquillity? But it would be occupying the time of the House to no purpose, to follow the hon. and learned Gentleman through his dexterous contrivances for setting himself up in this House and in the country. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said, that if a Conservative Government were to exist in Ireland, there would be nothing but bigotry and intolerance in that country. I do not believe, that the hon. and learned Gentleman would obtain credit for this assertion, even with his own party. The present Government has been very much praised by the hon. and learned Gentleman, for its even-handed justice in Ireland; but what was it? I will take a specimen with respect to the appointment of magistrates, a topic to which the hon. and learned Gentleman has referred. The Government pretended to set its face against the Repeal of the Legislative Union. The noble Lord, the present Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, came forward and made a set speech upon that subject. He declared, that the course he should pursue was, to dispense the patronage and favour of the Government, so as to exclude all who took any part in the repeal agitation. But with what sincerity has this declaration been acted upon? The Repeal Association was established by the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for Dublin himself. That hon. and learned Member, who was the founder of the association, was at the time he formed the society a magistrate of Ireland. Has he been removed from the commission? There were many other magis-

trates and deputy-lieutenants of counties who are repealers: have any of them been removed by this honest Government? What will the house think of there being no less than six Members of the House of Commons, sitting on the opposite Benches, magistrates, and some of them holding higher offices under the Government, who are members of the Repeal Association? In the list now in my hand are, first, the hon. and learned Gentleman himself; then the hon. Member for the county of Mayo (Mr. D. Browne), who was deputy-lieutenant and justice of the peace for that county; he was admitted a member of the Repeal Association on the 8th of June last year. Next comes the Member for the borough of Sligo, (Mr. Somers) a justice of the peace; then the Member for the county of Meath (Mr. H. Grattan), also a justice of the peace; then the Member for Ennis (Mr. Bridgeman) a justice of the peace; and then the Member for the county of Galway, who is a justice of the peace and a deputy-lieutenant for that county. These six Members all belong to the Repeal Association, and not one of them has been removed. These Gentlemen appear to have been respectively admitted on the 8th of June, 25th of August, 28th of September, and 26th October, 1840. Besides these, there were Lord French, a deputy-lieutenant and justice of the peace, and Mr. Thomas French, Mr. Arabin, Mr. Dillon O'Brien, Mr. Browne, Mr. Fogarty, and several other Gentlemen, justices of the peace, Mr. Valentine O'Connor Blake, and Sir M. D. Bellew, both deputy-lieutenants and justices of the peace, not one of whom has been removed from his position, although they are all admitted repealers. And this is the way in which even-handed justice is administered in Ireland? But what has been the course pursued towards the Conservatives? A gallant Friend of mine, the Member for the county of Armagh (Colonel Verner), has been removed from the commission of the peace, because he was present at a dinner in the county of Armagh, while a certain toast was given. Another hon. Friend of mine (Colonel Blacker) was removed from the office of justice of the peace, because his lady happened to wear some part of her dress, supposed to be of an orange colour. I would ask, is this the impartiality and even-handed justice of which the hon. and learned

Gentleman makes so great a boast? On the contrary, I must assert, that there never was a more partial, a more one-sided, or a more mischievous course of government adopted in any country, than that which was adopted by her Majesty's present Ministers towards Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman has eulogised the Government for their purity, and freedom from corruption at elections, while he stigmatised the Conservatives as being the patrons of bribery, and of every species of corruption. Does the hon. and learned Gentleman expect the House to believe him? Does he believe his statements himself? Are there not the most damning proofs against him upon the Table of the House? Are there not reports of committees against him? What was the conduct of the Government candidate at the recent election for the borough of St. Alban's? Was that all purity and abstinence from corruption? What was the tenor of the petition presented to this House last night from the borough of Nottingham? But to come a little nearer home, I can tell the hon. and learned Member that I am aware of the proceedings of this pure Administration at the present time in Ireland. I know perfectly well what is the nature of the efforts made to obtain a liberal colleague for the hon. and learned Member for the City of Dublin. I am well informed of the manner in which they are employing the present interregnum of Government throughout the country, especially in Ireland. I know full well for example the means now employed to warp some of the Conservative electors of Bandon from their principles, and if possible, to dislodge me from my seat as representative of that borough. But I defy the hon. and learned Gentleman to accomplish that object; I care not what unscrupulous means are employed for the purpose, nor should I desire any thing better than that the hon. and learned Member should put forth his whole strength and the influence of his Government also, together with his own, to unseat me. It is true I represent a constituency composed of humble men—men in moderate circumstances, but I know full well that they are men whom the whole patronage and wealth of the Government cannot bribe to desert their principles. Why the hon. and learned Gentleman and his party have actually sent a Radical agent to

Bandon to induce the electors to vote against me, and have authorised that person to tell them that if they would do so there would be plenty of offices and appointments for their sons and relations. And these are the advocates of purity of election? These are the men with clean hands, who get up to denounce bribery and corruption. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of the landlords of Ireland, and ascribed the state of that country to the severity with which the tenantry are treated by the landlords. Without replying to this general charge brought against the landlords of Ireland, I will ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether it becomes him to make such charges? I have understood that the hon. and learned Gentleman is rather a harsh landlord himself. [Mr. O'Connell said it is utterly untrue.] Did the hon. and learned Gentleman never distrain any of his tenants in the month of April for rent due on the 25th March preceding? [Mr. O'Connell: Not to my knowledge.] Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say, that he had never distrained his tenantry in the county of Kerry, in April, for rent due in March? Will he say that? As far as I am concerned, I can tell the House that I have been credibly assured that such is the fact; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman cannot in his place, deny it, ought the hon. and learned Gentleman to come down to that House and presume to attack the landlords of Ireland? Nothing can be more unfounded, more unwarrantable, or more unjust to the landlords of Ireland than to attribute the present state of that country to any conduct they have adopted. No; it is not the conduct of the landlords, it is the conduct of her Majesty's Government in Ireland, and the conduct of the officials at the Castle in Dublin, that the present disorganized state of the country is to be attributed—a state in which there is neither security for life or property. When a representation is made to the authorities at the Castle by the magistrates and gentry of the county of Tipperary of the disturbed state of that county, what is their response? Instead of the Government condemning, and that in the strongest terms, the conduct of the people, the gentlemen who make the representation to the Government are treated with some very nice ready cut and dried sentences, about property having its duties

as well as its rights. It is this species of conduct which has tended to produce the present state of things in Ireland. When the hon. and learned Member for Dublin got up in the repeal association, and pronounces what is totally inconsistent with all ideas of property in any country, what can be expected from those who regard his opinion as the law, and adopt it for their guidance? The hon. and learned Member proposes what he calls a plan for giving a fixity to tenures:—that no landlord should exercise the rights of property at all, unless he call in a jury to determine in what way the landlord is to manage his own property. Does holding forth such doctrine as this entitle the hon. and learned Gentleman to arraign the landlords of Ireland for their conduct, and accuse them of causing the present state of things in that ill-fated country? Why, two foul murders have been perpetrated in Ireland within the last week or ten days. The victims were most quiet and excellent gentlemen, both differed in politics from me; but I happened to know one of them, the other I did not know. Why were those murders perpetrated? Because one of the unhappy gentlemen had had the audacity to go on his own land, for the purpose of appropriating some portion of it which had been in possession of a tenant to his own use—he meant the case of Mr. Hall. What other was the assignable motive for the commission of this crime. May I not with justice say that it was because the people had heard that an honourable and learned Gentleman, who ranked high at the Irish bar, and who was known to possess a thorough knowledge of the law of the land, and great influence with the ignorant people, had propounded the doctrine that no tenant ought to be removed from his holding? What was the cause of the tragedy in the case of Mr. Butler Bryan, a gentleman of extremely liberal opinions? He bought the palace and demesne land of a suppressed bishopric, and the former holders resented the act. Thus were the poor Irish led to conclude, from the authority of the hon. and learned Gentleman, that every landlord who presumed to let his own land, taking it from one to give it to another, ought to be visited with severe punishment. The end of all is, that the country has got into such a state of disorganization that no man can assert his rights,

And this is the state of things that is to continue; and the House is invoked not to desert the Government who suffers these things to take place, and which never interferes with the mischievous proceedings of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I have hitherto followed the hon. and learned Member for Dublin through the somewhat indirect topics to which he has referred. I will now, with the leave of the House offer a very few observations and they shall be brief indeed upon the important question under consideration, which has, I feel been well nigh exhausted. The right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War (Mr. Macaulay) resorted to a very ingenious argument. He said, that he admitted, that if her Majesty's Government had ceased to possess the confidence of the House of Commons, they ought not to hold the reins of Government; but the want of confidence on the part of the House of Commons was not to be shewn by the merely throwing out legislative measures proposed by the Government. The first duty of a Government the right hon. Gentleman said, was to administer the laws as they were; and if the House of Commons disapproved of the mode in which the Government administered the laws, then he at once conceded the point, that it was the duty of the Government to retire from office. This is, no doubt, a very specious, and ingenious, but in my opinion, it is a merely plausible and not a sound argument. Is it not a most important part of the duty of the executive Government to propound such measures as they deem essential to the well-being of the country? Have I not the authority of the present Government for that doctrine? Was it not stated by the Prime Minister, in the other House of Parliament, and by the noble Lord opposite (Lord J. Russell), on the occasion of their resigning office in May, 1839, when they were defeated on the Jamaica Bill, that the rejection of that measure demonstrated that they did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons, and therefore, they were bound to retire from the Government of the country? Was not that an obstruction of a legislative measure? Most manifestly it was. I am wrong, however, in saying defeated on the Jamaica Bill, for her Majesty's Ministers then had a majority of five. That they then told their royal mistress and told her truly, that such a miserable majority

proved they had lost the confidence of the House of Commons, and that they could therefore no longer carry on the Government with credit to themselves, or with advantage to the country. But have I not further the authority of the present Government for the proposition I have laid down? Have I not the admission made by the noble Lord, who is now the Ministerial leader of the House of Commons, that when the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, in 1835, resigned in consequence of the resolution which the noble Lord moved and carried against him, respecting the Church of Ireland; that the conduct of the right hon. Baronet was on that occasion in accordance with the principles of the British constitution? Yes, I have all these arguments to support me against the fine-spun sophistry, the very ingenious device of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary at War, the resorting to which merely served to show how much her Majesty's Ministers are disposed to extend the term of their ignominious existence; how anxious they are to eke out the time, in order to get another quarter's salary; and with what ingenuity they seek for every pretext to stir up the country, that they may remain a little longer in office. Then, with respect to the question of free trade in sugar, timber, and corn, I am bound to give credit to the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, when he states in his plan, that these measures were not propounded on the sudden without previous consideration, at a late period of the Session, and merely to ward off if possible from his Government the blow inflicted by the recent adverse divisions of eleven and twenty-one on the Irish Registration Bill. But has the noble Lord ventured to say, that the Government, previous to the meeting of Parliament, considered the question of free trade with a view to bring forward any legislative measure respecting it this Session? I do not believe they did any such thing. My opinion is, that even now, they have determined to suggest these measures because they felt, that they were in great peril of being driven from office, being in the very awkward predicament of having a majority of the House against them. They may, finding the vessel in danger, have looked out a-head, and seeing the likelihood of foul weather, have prepared for the storm. In that event it was very desirable that they should have a few tubs to throw to

the whale. The hon. and learned Gentleman taunted us on this side of the House with the discordant and multifarious materials of which our party is made up, and the hon. and learned Gentleman laughed at the heterogeneous compound. But I beg to tell that hon. and learned Gentleman, that whatever differences of opinion may prevail on some points among the friends with whom I act, yet it will be found on questions of principle, and of governmental policy that they will be compact and united as one man. There may be divergencies of opinion on some questions, which, as independent men, they cannot compromise; but with respect to the general scope and policy of the measures to be propounded by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and with respect to his constitutional proceedings, we have all perfect confidence in them, and there will be but one feeling prevailing through the whole party. But to revert to the question of free trade, is it credible if the Government had contemplated so important a measure at the commencement of the Session, they would have omitted all allusion to it in the speech from the Throne? Is there any interest in the country that will not be affected by it? It affects the agricultural, the manufacturing, the trading, and the commercial interests of this great empire; nay, it concerns the very food of the people of Great Britain. Ought not the Government then to have called the attention of Parliament to these important questions at the commencement of the Session, if in truth they had intended to call upon Parliament to legislate upon them? But they did not do so. They propounded these measures merely because they found themselves in a position in which it was utterly impossible for them to go on with the Government of the country, and therefore to save themselves from what to them would be the worst of all possible evils—a resignation of office—they had resorted to these subjects of agitation, and had at the last hour discovered, that these were the questions by which they would be the most likely to raise a ferment in the country, and be thereby enabled to retain what they appeared to value above all things besides, namely, their places.

Mr. O'Connell believed, that strictly speaking, he had not a right to address the House a second time on the same question, but in common justice he ought

to be permitted to explain, an attack having been made on him personally. He was bound to say, first, that he had been very much assailed in every description of newspapers, for everything but that. He was never before attacked with regard to his conduct as a landlord—never! In the next place, there was not a single farm of his (Mr. O'Connell's), that was not let at from 4s. to 5s. an acre less than the adjacent farms were let for, except one, which was the property of his hon. Friend behind him (Sir D. Roche). Then he had more persons living on his lands, having houses and gardens, paying no rent at all, than any other man possessing four times his property. He had never turned out a tenant by a notice to quit for the purpose of clearing the land. Whenever he had turned out a tenant, it was on account of personal misconduct; and another person would then occupy the land, and he gave the outgoing tenant a year's rent as a fine on his quitting. Another charge made against him was, that he had made a distress on a tenant in April, for rent due in March. If anything of the sort had been done, it was without his knowledge. There never was an instance of his having made a distress in Ireland.

Sir D. Roche bore testimony to the conduct of the hon. and learned Member as a landlord. He had always heard of his being a most forbearing landlord.

Mr. Sergeant Jackson asked where was the property to which the hon. Member alluded?

Sir D. Roche said, that it was the next property to Mr. O'Connell's in the county of Kerry.

Mr. O'Connell asked from whom the hon. and learned Member had obtained his information.

Mr. Sergeant Jackson: he made the statement on the authority of a letter, and he would give the name of the writer on any proper occasion.

Mr. Stoney said, a question had been asked by the hon. Member for Finsbury of the right hon. Baronet, which, in his opinion, well deserved an answer. He would venture to say, that the state of the working classes in the great cities and manufacturing towns of the country, was so bad, as hardly to be capable of exaggeration. He wished, therefore, to repeat that question, and to ask the right hon. Baronet what he proposed should be done with respect to those classes? In his opi-

nion, there was a growing indifference in the country to both the two great parties who divided the House. The question, which should rule, was of infinitely less interest than the question, what should be done to benefit the working classes? If they could embody their opinions in one sentence, it would be "a plague on both your factions." The lower classes in the great towns had been driven to this state of apathy by the pressure of their increasing sufferings; and they were looking merely to see what practical remedy the House would devise for the evils under which they laboured. Among other things which had added to the general distress among the poorer classes, must be reckoned the enactment of the Irish Poor-law, which in its first effects had driven immense multitudes out of Ireland to take refuge in the great manufacturing towns of this country, where they entered into competition with, and undersold, the native workmen. In his opinion, a great deal of this misery arose from neglecting to enforce the existing laws, and from the want of changes in the laws corresponding to the great changes in the constitution of society which had lately taken place, and from ignorance of the real state of the population. If, then, a change of parties merely were to take place, the great body of the people would care little for it; their care was which of these parties was likely to do the best for the improvement of the great mass of the community. In supporting the Government on this occasion, he did not feel that he should be inconsistent, because he should only be voting as he had always voted, having always considered the present Government the most likely to effect the object he had stated. At any rate, if the present state of things were allowed to go on much longer, it would be impossible to rule this country without constant outbreaks, without crime increasing, and the gaols fuller. At present the increase of crime was most alarming, and the increase in the consumption of spirits, which was always a test of the moral state of the population, was very great. If it were asked, what did he propose, he would say, that nothing was a greater evil than the even-balanced state of parties, and, attached, as he was to the present Government, he should far prefer seeing the right hon. Gentleman in office and able to form such a Government as would carry measures for the



amelioration of that frightful condition of the lower classes. This he firmly believed the right hon. Gentleman was desirous to effect, and would be glad to see. It ought to be remembered, that whereas some years ago the proportion of the agricultural to the manufacturing population was two to one; that proportion was now just reversed, and the commercial and manufacturing classes were to the agricultural as two to one. These persons were all subject to the fluctuations of trade, and one very great evil was the neglect to give them such an education as would fit them to meet these fluctuations when they occurred. Among the humbler classes nine-tenths of their income went in food. The price of this had varied within a short time 100 per cent. Could there be a greater evil to one who was liable to all the fluctuations of demand for labour, and all the fluctuations in the amount of wages—to be liable, moreover, to fluctuations of 100 per cent. in the price of his food? It was, therefore, most important, that, before the close of this debate, the right hon. Gentleman, who he believed was willing to do something, should tell the House what it was that he would do. He implored the right hon. Gentleman, if power came into his hands, to employ it, not to aggrandise his friends, but to improve the condition of the lower orders. This was incumbent on the right hon. Gentleman and the House, not only for the sake of their individual comfort—not only for their own happiness, but it was incumbent upon them, he verily believed, for the sake of the safety of the realm.

The Earl of *Darlington* was anxious to address the House, in consequence of the speech of the hon. Member for Lincoln, (Mr. Handley) on the previous evening. He confessed, that he had listened to the speech of that hon. Member, with pain and surprise, for he had known him for many years. He was besides a neighbour of the hon. Member's, and one of his constituents. Though he had the misfortune to differ from the hon. Member for Lincoln, in politics, he did not complain of him in that respect, for he did not complain of any person expressing the opinions he entertained, provided he expressed them in a fair and straightforward manner. Up to last night, he had looked upon his hon. Friend, the Member for Lincoln, as one of the most upright and straightforward Members of that House. But his experience of

what had occurred last night, had altered his opinion. He had given his hon. Friend notice that he intended to make a few observations on the speech he had delivered. His hon. Friend had been in the House in the course of the evening, but had gone away. However, having given him notice, as he had not thought fit to remain, he was not on that account to be debarred the opportunity of making those observations which he had intended to make. Those who knew him knew that he was not the person that would wish to say anything behind a man's back which he would not prefer to say, in his presence. He had already stated, that he had heretofore considered his hon. Friend to be one of the most straightforward Members of that House. Why, then, should that hon. Member, in an evil hour, and by one single act of tergiversation, have abandoned those constituents whom he had always before defended in a manly manner? At the time that he made his extraordinary speech he did not offer any pretext, or even the shadow of an excuse, for the conduct he had thought fit to pursue. In the first instance, he commenced his speech by answering some remarks made by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, whose speech, the hon. Member confessed, he had not heard, but had read it in the newspaper reports. The hon. Member indulged in a number of remarks on that speech, and quoted besides the speeches of other eminent statesmen—speeches made ten years ago—to prove that they were inconsistent with what they professed at present. Whether that were the case or not he did not pretend to say. He was not the defender of inconsistency, if such there was, in the conduct of those who were so much better able to defend themselves. The hon. Member for Lincoln, had raked up the speeches of eminent statesmen delivered at former periods, and had enlarged upon the inconsistency which they exhibited. He had no hesitation to say, that inconsistency was a most dangerous text to go on in that House. If they were to look to the conduct of eminent statesmen who for a course of twenty or thirty years had taken a prominent part in public affairs, it would be difficult to expect that some part of their conduct would not be inconsistent with another. But what he complained of was, that when the hon. Member was enlarging on his text of inconsistency, the hon. Member had confined his observations to one side of the House, whilst he might

have found an example of inconsistency in the conduct of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, and the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, was Member for Huntingdonshire in 1821, and did the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, never hear of a letter written by that noble Lord whilst he was Member for Huntingdonshire, in defence of the interests of British agriculture, and in support of its protection from foreign competition? He would ask, was the measure now proposed by the noble Lord, for the annihilation of the landed interest in conformity with the principles which he then avowed? The same year the noble Lord produced an essay on the Reform Bill, and he would ask, was the Reform Bill brought forward in 1831, in conformity with the principles of that essay? He did not mention this for the purpose of complaint, for as he had said, looking to men who had been twenty or thirty years in public life, it would be difficult to find any in whom some inconsistency might not be discovered; but what he complained of was, that it was not fair to single out one or two persons as the objects of a charge of this kind. He would ask, what was the hon. Member's intention in making this speech? He might answer, that as he had given up his constituents, and as it was his last dying speech, he might as well indulge his inclination in giving his support to those Ministers whom he usually supported. But could the hon. Member say, that he was influenced by a sense of right. The persons by whom that hon. Member was returned are a set of yeomen, the most independent in the county, and by these alone was that hon. Member returned, and every one must know that the very existence of those who returned the hon. Member—or their utter ruin—depended on the success or failure of the measure now proposed by her Majesty's Government. He should, therefore, have thought that gratitude alone would have induced that hon. Member to have supported his constituents, who had given him so kind, so disinterested, and so truly independent a support. When he heard the hon. Member's speech last night, he could not imagine that he was the same man whom he had heard speak in the debate on the sugar duties, and who, on that occasion, censured the conduct of the Government in the strongest terms. On that occasion the hon. Member went on to say, that he doubted whether a fixed duty

would be any protection, or whether it would not be worse than no protection at all, and so thoroughly did the hon. Member conceive their whole financial measures to be founded on the same principle that he felt bound to protest against them, and to declare, that if it depended on him the Ministers should never bring them forward. He gave it to be understood that in consequence of their Corn-law proposition he would abandon her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member repeated the same thing at an agricultural meeting held shortly after, and subsequently at a meeting in Lincolnshire, a letter from the hon. Member was read in which he said, that whatever course the Government pursued—whatever measures they brought forward, he must now abandon them. After the hon. Member had expressed these opinions, he would ask, what public act had the Government since performed to re-call the confidence of the hon. Member? If they had performed no public act to re-call his confidence, had they performed any private act; For he trusted, that the hon. Member in the course he had taken, acted from pure and not from interested motives. He had a right to put this question, and he asked any hon. Member on the opposite benches to get up and say, what was the public act of the Government which has since entitled them to the confidence of the hon. Member. What was the charge which he brought against the hon. Member? It was this, that in the defence of his constituents he thought proper to assert, that in the measures the Government had brought forward they had forfeited his confidence, and he now saw him come forward to retract his words, and place confidence in them. Was it not most extraordinary that a gentleman who had acted in this way should have gone through a long speech without having thought it necessary to enter into any defence of his conduct. The reason was, that he had no excuse to offer, and the only excuse he pretended to offer was, that he looked upon the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, as no better friend to the agriculturist than the noble Lord opposite. But let it be observed, that the same hon. Member had only a week before stated, that he believed the measure proposed by the noble Lord would be the ruin of the agriculturist. During last Session he had been present during two debates on the Corn-laws, and on both those occasions the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, had made two

of the ablest speeches in defence of the existing Corn-laws. After that, how could the hon. Member suppose that the right hon. Baronet, was not more a friend to the agricultural interest than the noble Lord. He was never more astonished in his life than to see the hon. Member have the face to make that assertion. The hon. Member went on to quote a passage from the speech of the right hon. Baronet, from which he argued that the right hon. Baronet had an intention to alter the existing scale, and he asked him to state whether he would place the turning point of the scale at 70s., at 60s., at 40s., or at 30s. Now he was present on both the occasions he referred to, and he always understood the right hon. Baronet to say, that he would resist the subversion of the existing Corn-laws. But the hon. Member ought to recollect that the present Corn-law was still in force, and what ground had he to suppose, that the right hon. Baronet would consent to a change that would subvert the present system. He had already said, that up to his speech last night, whenever the interests of his constituents were concerned, there was not a more able and determined defender of their right than the hon. Member for Lincolnshire. Hitherto, when the question of the Corn-laws had been brought forward by independent Members of the House, when the question could not have the same weight, he had given it his opposition. But when it was brought forward by the Government, and when the interests of the Government were put in competition with the success of the measure, the hon. Member defended the Government and abandoned the Corn-laws. With respect to the question before the House, in February, 1840, when a similar motion was brought forward by his hon. Friend, the Member for Devonshire, he had supported it. Nothing since had occurred to alter his opinion, and he would, therefore, give his vote in support of his right hon. Friend's resolution.

Sir Charles Grey said, that the hon. Member for Kilmarnock, and the noble Lord the Member for Shropshire having given the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. Handley) notice to attend, he had thought it his duty to obey their summons, and as they did not appear, they were determined that punishment should be inflicted in his absence, and certainly they had not spared him. But among the terms that were applied to him, the charge of "tergiversation and want of

straightforwardness," was among the last that ought to have been so applied; he merited neither the one report nor the other. The ground on which he had placed his present vote was so clear as to leave the noble Lord without any excuse for insinuations that he had been actuated by anything like a private motive. That accusation, he thought, whatever else might have been uttered in the absence of the hon. Member, might have been spared. The ground selected by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire, on which he, and others who acted with him, intended to rest their votes upon the present occasion, was to be found stated in the hon. Member's speech. He put it to the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, as a question that might be easily answered, and might be answered in one word—he asked the right hon. Gentleman to inform him, and those interested in the subject of corn, whether his present view was to continue the existing protection to the agricultural interest? In the coming discussions on the Corn-laws it was hardly possible that the House should not have an answer to that question, but up to the present moment nothing had been intimated by which they could gather the right hon. Gentleman's opinions. For as to the vague declaration of a sliding scale, a letter had been recently published in the public newspapers, by a near relative of one of the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman, in which it was said that he was an advocate of a sliding scale, but he proposed so to alter it that the duty levied would be actually lower than the 8s. proposed by the noble Lord. He asked, then, whether it was not an intelligible ground for the hon. Gentleman the Member for Lincolnshire, and for the noble Lord who was his colleague, to put themselves on when they said—"We are asked to turn out the Ministers with whom we have this sole ground of difference, to bring in another party, at the head of which stands the right hon. Baronet, who merely tells us that he is for a sliding scale, without saying what that scale is to be; whilst feelers are thrown out by his supporters that his sliding scale may be so arranged as to leave less protection to the agricultural interests than that proposed by the noble Lord, and we decline to withhold our confidence from our own Friends in other matters and give it to hon. Gentlemen opposite, without knowing anything of their intentions. The course which the debate had taken that

night was indeed a strange one; it had consisted only of attacks upon the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire, and upon the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin; he had not heard anything addressed to the question really before the House. To that he would shortly apply himself. He confessed that he should regret not to see at all times a powerful opposition in that House, but the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the present opposition had greatly crippled the party which he led. It was believed by the people of this country that it was against the spirit of the constitution that any Ministers should remain in office against the feelings and wishes of a decided majority of the representatives of the people, fully and fairly expressed; but the right hon. Baronet had not been content with this feeling; he had undertaken the critical and difficult task of reducing to a formula of words, to put into writing, the spirit of the constitution, and this portion of the unwritten law of Parliament. In this he had gone further than any of his predecessors. The constitutional doctrine was, that the House should suggest to the Crown that the advisers of the Sovereign had lost the confidence of the House, and it was in those terms that the wish of the House for a change of Ministers was usually conveyed. The right hon. Baronet, however, had advanced one step beyond; he had not stopped at the mere representation to the Sovereign, that the Advisers of the Crown had lost the confidence of the House, but he had added that it was unconstitutional in them to remain in office. It might be the impression of the right hon. Baronet that such an address was a mere matter of form, but coming from one branch of the Legislature to another, and adding this major proposition to the minor, did not the right hon. Gentleman consider that if it were an imputation against Ministers, that under such circumstances they remained in office, a resolution of this kind would be also an imputation against the person by whom they were retained? This, therefore, was a novel proceeding, and it was treading upon dangerous ground. At the beginning of the last Session there had been a vote of the House, which amounted to a denial of the minor part of the motion of the right hon. Baronet, as a majority declared that they would not say that the Ministers did not possess the confidence of the House. Since that time what ground had there been for a change? There had

been only three great measures brought forward: the Irish Franchise Bill, the Poor-law Bill, and the present measures before them, the most important by far of any that at any period within his memory, and perhaps within the memory of older Members, had been introduced for practical legislation. They comprised the principle of free trade, and were the commencement of a total abandonment of the system on which the commercial and financial relations of this country had been conducted. The principle was, that the time had arrived when it was necessary to abandon monopoly, and to find support and employment for the overteeming manufacturing population of this country, by calling into existence, as customers, the whole world; placing only upon our own produce such a protection as was necessary to guard against the evils which some might suffer by a sudden change. It was as a part of three great measures that a reduction of the sugar duties, from 63s. to 56s. was proposed. That one measure of the reduction of the sugar duties was selected for attack by hon. Gentlemen opposite. A resolution was brought forward by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool, most artfully worded, so as to preclude the necessity for a permanent opposition of the noble Lord's own party to this very reduction. The resolution rested only on temporary grounds. When they talked in common conversation between man and man, that one was not prepared to assent to a proposal, it was inferred as a matter of course that he might be very soon willing to do what he was not prepared to do at that moment. And it was on a resolution so artfully worded that the right hon. Baronet now came forward with his resolution, that it was unconstitutional to permit Ministers longer to retain office. He knew not by what advice it was, that the right hon. Baronet had been induced to put such a resolution upon the journals. He was confident, from the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Exeter (Sir William Follett) last night, that he was not the adviser, for, if he had advised it, he would not have directed the main portion of his argument to the minor proposition, and given only a few loose words on the major. He would ask the right hon. Baronet how often the same circumstances would occur to himself, or to any other Member in that House under the present state of the representation? A great change had been effected by the Reform

Bill; that change had met his approval; he believed, that the people had more influence in that House than they had before, although he thought that they had not enough; one of the greatest benefits of that measure was, that no minister could now ride rough shod over the people. To prevent this it was that he always wished to see parties nicely balanced in that House, so as to ensure the careful consideration of every measure. It stopped party legislation, and he did not know how the interference of the House could be more properly applied, than to cause the feelings of the people to be ascertained. But if the right hon. Baronet came into office upon the principle of his present resolution, he would be sure to find it a more slippery foundation than even his own aliding scale. The constitution of this House was so materially altered that they could not take for a precedent what had occurred a century and a-half, a century, or even half a century ago. The interests of the country had become so vast that the House was not merely influenced by home considerations. Great and important interests now found representatives there, and he would ask the right hon. Baronet whether, in such a state of parties, he were to bring forward measures in his budget which should prove distasteful to some of the great bodies and interests in the city of London—whether he was not conscious that upon any of those great and important measures, he might not find himself startled by a majority against him? and if, after a defeat upon such a measure, the Opposition were to come down and say, "How can you hold office?" it would be a situation in which no Minister ought to be placed. The right hon. Baronet was the first to put upon the journals of the House a proposition so objectionable, and he would find it not only a deadly weapon against himself, if he should succeed to power, but it would destroy the power and control of that House, and Ministers would be living under the influence of particular bodies and interests, instead of remaining in office on the lawful and constitutional will of the Crown. For these reasons even those Members who could vote for the first part of the resolution, because they thought that Ministers had lost the confidence of the House, would find it impossible to vote for the last part of the proposition. The adoption of such a resolution would not only remove the present Ministry, but it would with equal power prevent the Crown for the next three years

from taking the sense of the people upon these important measures; and were hon. Gentlemen prepared to control the right of the Crown to ascertain the sense of the people upon measures submitted to Parliament; and to stop that discordance between the votes of the representatives and the opinions of the people, which could not long continue without the greatest danger to the constitution? He maintained that the time had arrived when the alteration proposed to be made in the restrictive system upon commerce might be made with advantage to the country. The manufacturers produced far more than the consumers of Great Britain could take off their hands, and there were thousands of them, who, if not starving, were suffering worse than starvation, and were exposed to miseries which none could contemplate without sensations of horror. Under these circumstances, it was the duty of the Government to come forward and introduce such measures as would remedy, as far as possible, the evils which existed, and to provide labour for our population, and give them the means of escaping from those horrors to which he had alluded. If, however, that could not be done, the effect would be, that those customers would be shut out from the markets of the country, who, if admitted, would give employment to every unemployed man throughout the kingdom. It was incumbent on them to come forward at this moment, when it was considered that such a course would afford them the means of meeting the present deficiency in the finances of the country. He thought that discussions should take place in this House upon the various questions in agitation before an appeal was made to the country, in order that the people of England might be made aware of their merits. Upon the Corn-laws especially they ought not to be called upon to express an opinion before the question had undergone a fair discussion. He contended that all the debates which had taken place had not been more than sufficient to inform the people upon the point at issue, and he was the more convinced of this from their result; but he would say, that the opinions which had been expressed by hon. Members, had not been formed upon a full consideration of the question [*a laugh*]. It might appear absurd and preposterous that he should say so, but he was certain that twelve months would not elapse before the greater part of the landlords of England, and of the most enlightened agriculturists of the

world, would be convinced that the safety of their own property and the prosperity of this country depended mainly upon the repeal of the Corn-laws, as well as upon there being a repeal of every other monopoly or restriction on trade.

Mr. *Cumming Bruce* said, the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down, commenced his speech with an allusion to a pretty and unfortunate countrywoman of mine who, he said, had fallen into a peccadillo. Not being aware what share the hon. and learned Gentleman might have had in the transaction to which he refers, but under the influence of a natural instinct of modesty, and actuated by feelings of commiseration for my fair and unfortunate countrywoman, whom the hon. Gentleman seemed about to drag to the bar of this august assembly—a more formidable tribunal than the Cutty Stool, I felt constrained to rise from my place and take refuge in the library, and it was not till he had nearly concluded his very long speech that I had sufficiently recovered my composure to return to my place. The House will, therefore, not expect that I should reply, as doubtless it deserved, to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman. When I did return to the House, I found him declaiming on the state of severe and unparalleled distress under which the population of our great manufacturing towns had for the last four years been suffering. Other Gentlemen who had spoken previously in this debate, and particularly the Member for Shrewsbury, in a speech which did honour to his good and kindly feelings, had expatiated on the same topic. But did it not occur to these hon. Gentlemen that these distresses, the existence of which I do not deny, and which no one more deeply deplores than I do, have all grown to their present height during the period for which her Majesty's present Ministers have held office. I confess I cannot understand what argument these hon. Gentlemen can legitimately draw from those distresses, if they think that Government has any influence in causing or preventing distress, unless it be one unfavourable to the continued existence of the present Government; and yet all of them have spoken in resistance of the motion of my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, the object of which is to relieve the country from their misgovernment. In this there does seem to me a strange inconsistency. They allow, in terms, of the first part of the motion of

the right hon. Member for Tamworth, that the Government have no power to carry out legislation in this House,—that, indeed, seems allowed on all sides; but surely, if legislation be of any use at all, it is of use to secure the prosperity and alleviate the sufferings of the people; and her Majesty's Ministers not possessing sufficiently the confidence of this House to carry the legislative measures which they deem necessary to relieve them, are not in a state to discharge with advantage to those suffering classes the first duty of a Government. Now, Sir, the House will allow me to say, that I have listened with satisfaction to many of the speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite,—speeches undoubtedly characterised by great ability, but still more by great ingenuity in mystifying and evading the real question before the House, and that satisfaction has not been diminished by their having altogether failed to answer the arguments so convincingly stated by the right hon. Baronet in support of the proposition which he has felt it his duty to submit to the House. I do not say this in any disparagement of those speeches, for the arguments of my right hon. Friend were in fact unanswerable, and if anything more was required to establish the truth of his propositions, the speeches of my right hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, and of my hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Exeter, amply supplied that deficiency. Those speeches all remain unanswered. As, however, it seems the pleasure of the House, at least of the opposite side of it, to prolong the discussion of a question, in my view, sufficiently established, and as no county Member for Scotland has hitherto taken part in this debate; as, also, since I had the honour of representing the counties which I now represent, I have never ventured to intrude myself on your attention, I trust I may be excused for now soliciting the indulgence of the House. I have said, that the speech of the right hon. baronet, the Member for Pembroke, was one of those which pre-eminently proved the necessity of the motion now under our consideration. Indeed, that speech seemed to make a strong impression on hon. Gentlemen opposite,—for scarce one of them has risen since he spoke, who has not betrayed the soreness of his feelings by indulging in all sorts of unfounded and acrimonious personal attacks on my right hon. Friend. Sir, he can afford to allow

them that gratification, and he need feel no surprise that they indulge in it. On this he may depend, that they will never forgive him the example of noble and disinterested patriotism which he has set them, of sacrificing office to principle. They accuse him of having left his party and abandoned his principles. He has done no such thing—he left office, he abandoned salary, but he remains as decided and as conscientious a Whig as ever he was—because he so remained firm to his old Whig principles, he relinquished a high and important office, and for the same reason he subsequently declined office when offered to him by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, till the experience of the short, but able and distinguished administration of that right hon. Baronet, convinced him that he could act with him without any, the slightest sacrifice of principle. And it seems to me that his conduct, and that of his noble Friend who sits beside him, the Member for Lancashire, has done more to restore the character of public men in public estimation, than the conduct of her Majesty's present Ministers,—and this is saying a great deal,—has done to impair it. The hon. and learned Member for Reading, who opened the debate last night, went over the ground already taken by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Edinburgh, that the absence of all power to carry on legislation in this House was no reason why a ministry should retire from office; and that more especially since the passing of the Reform Bill, and as a necessary consequence of that bill, parties were, and might be expected to be so nearly balanced, that a Government would not be justified any longer in requiring the aid of considerable, or indeed of any majorities as a condition of their remaining in power. Now, I admit, that the argument was an ingenious one, if its object was to establish for her Majesty's present Ministers a right to the permanent retention of office; but it could not be considered as offering to their, till of late, favorite measure, that tribute of praise which it had a right to expect from those who so warmly supported it; and if that short and pithy question in which an illustrious Duke in another place is said, on the first blush of it, to have concentrated his objections to the Reform Bill, "that he should like to know how, if it became law, the king's Government was to be carried on," were difficult of answer before, it

has not become of easier solution in consequence of the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I do not, however, agree in the justice of those arguments, for I think it was clearly established by the hon. Member for Suffolk, that since the passing of that bill, the Government was for a time supported by large and powerful majorities, and that the gradual and striking diminution of those majorities till they have now, notwithstanding the unsparing use of the power and influence of the Government, fallen below Zero, is fairly to be attributed to their having lost the confidence of Parliament and the country. Now, for myself, I must confess that when the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced to the House his intention of moving the continuance of the sugar duties, I for one, coming as the hon. Gentleman opposite knows, from a remote and inaccessible province, was so simple as not to credit the possibility of the Government persevering in that intention. We were then on the eve of the birthday of our gracious Queen, and it seemed to me that the announcement must have been resolved on with the justifiable view, of not allowing that auspicious day—*alba sit, felixque semper*—to be disturbed by the anxieties which the resignation of the Ministry, and the steps necessary for the formation of a new Government must have occasioned. I fancied that from some such motive, they had not ungracefully resolved to submit for a few days longer to that universal disgust and reprobation, which the mere notion of their attempting to carry on the Government after their recent defeats in this House, had not failed and could not fail to excite. Their tenacity of office which, as they had long ceased to exercise the powers of Government, charity itself could only attribute to their reluctance to part with its emoluments had already induced them to persevere beyond the precedents of all past example; and it did seem to me incredible, that any set of persons, affecting the character of British Statesmen, could have made up their minds to plunge yet deeper into such an abyss of political degradation [*"Hear, hear."*] It seems, however, that I was mistaken, that there is "in the lowest depths a lower still;" and that they a Whig Government, as, with an assurance unparalleled, they affect to call themselves in defiance of the fact, open and acknowledged by themselves and by all men, of their having lost the confidence both of this

and the other House of Parliament, are resolved, relying on court favour alone, and on the alleged support of their Sovereign, whose confidence they thus dare to abuse and betray, still to cling to office. And they call themselves a Whig Government; they hanging on to power—no, not to power, but to place, by the apronstrings of the Ladies of the Bed Chamber—they call themselves a Whig Government! I, Sir, never had any pretension to the name or character of a Whig, but I do remember, that not many years ago, it was the designation of a great and respectable party, including in its numbers many men of highest character, of great ability, of unquestioned patriotism. Are any such to be found now in the ranks of the present Government? [*Hear! from the Ministerial Benches.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheer. The hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets says there are; and I admit that he is an example of the “great sublime he taught.” But they are few and far between—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*—some few such may still give them a cold, and reluctant, and occasional support, because it does require no ordinary strength of mind and force of principle to make patriotism triumph over party; but the great majority, the leading ornaments of that great party disavow and condemn them, and are joined to us, once opposed to them, in upholding those true principles of the Constitution in Church and State, against which their whole official existence seems to me, to have been one continued attack. Sir, that the remnant of that great party, having abandoned all its principles, and been repudiated by all who gave it any claim to support, should have been enabled for the last six years to usurp the Government of the country, is a fact only to be accounted for by that weakness of the body politic which not unnaturally followed the moral and political fever through which it has been the fate of this country to pass; but the state of indifference and exhaustion which followed the great crisis to which I allude, could not have resulted in the toleration of a Government so incapable, had there not been found men content to maintain themselves in office by every means of unworthy subserviency to the wishes and desires of extreme parties out of doors, and every appliance of corrupt patronage to retain the support of those whom the chances of excitement had invested with the power of influencing the return of Members to this

House—I say not of Members themselves, for, of course, Gentlemen opposite would have scorned to profit from such patronage, they being “all honourable men”—but this system has led to its natural results, and we now find the country placed in a situation of difficulty and danger, from which it is our duty, at whatever hazard, to endeavour to extricate it. Now, among the prominent causes of those difficulties are our financial embarrassments; and how have they been produced? Why, mainly, that by their meddling incapacity they have involved us in a constant interference with the internal concerns of foreign states—an interference in violation of all their pledges and professions, uncalled for by the honour or interests of the country, but not the less causing a constant drain on our finances by the number of “little wars” in which it has been their pleasure to engage; while, by their disregard and abandonment of every recognized duty and principle of Government, they have encouraged and fomented discontent and disaffection, both at home and in the colonies, thereby also calling for the maintenance of increased establishments, and increased charges on the people. Now let us look to this. In the course of this debate, her Majesty’s Ministers, and generally all the Members who have spoken from that side of the House, but more especially the Member for Meath, whose eloquence seemed wound up to an unusual pitch of fanciful extravagance, plumed themselves on the laurels won for the Government, by the policy of the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. In a tone and spirit not absolutely disinterested, the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, seemed actuated by the sort of feeling which, in my country, is expressed in the pithy form of the proverb—“Scratch me and I’ll scratch you,” while the hon. Member for Meath, his eye all the while “in a fine frenzy rolling,”—a real Irish frenzy—eloquent, impassioned, coming from the heart, crowned the statue of the noble Lord with the conqueror’s wreath, and called on us to fall down and worship it. Now in that concert of approbation I confess myself unable to join. I wont go back to your uncalled-for and impolitic interference in the dispute between Holland and Belgium, out of which, and not remotely, grew the necessity for your recent interference in Syria—though that, perhaps, you may consider as not much to be urged against it—



seeing that on those operations you rest your main arguments of glorification; and seeing that you belong to that class of politicians who look back with indifference on the means, provided the end helps to keep you in the saddle—I will not go back to that impolitic interference farther than to remark, that its result has been on the one hand, to set up the shadow of a kingdom, and the reality of a French province; and on the other, to offend and alienate an old and faithful ally; a people sympathizing with England in religion, in the love of freedom, in the force of her industrious energies, and the associations of a common origin. Nor will I go back to your inglorious and unsuccessful meddling with the civil war in Spain, where, at the cost of much British treasure, much British blood, and some sacrifice of the military renown of British soldiers, you have succeeded for a time, in setting up the despotism of a military adventurer in that distracted country. I say not, whether against such difficulties as it encountered, that ill-fated legion could, by any perfection of discipline and valour, by any skill and military talent of its leader, have achieved less disastrous results. With that I have nothing to do, as I am altogether incompetent to decide. I speak merely of its success; and for its want of success, the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who sanctioned and encouraged, if he did not originate it, and not the hon. and gallant Officer, the Member for Westminster, who, I dare say, did all that became a good officer and brave man, is justly responsible. And now, with respect to your policy with regard to Turkey. It seems to me to have been strangely inconsistent with that pursued not long since by previous Governments. I don't wish to allude to our interference with regard to Greece, farther than to point out this inconsistency. I would not be understood as offering any opinion in disparagement of the Government of Mr. Canning. He may well have been seduced by the "magic of a name," and I, who from its blue seas, have "hailed that bright land of battle and of song," I who have trodden the hallowed soil of that delicious "grave of many memories," I can sympathise with the generous enthusiasm which may have drawn a veil over the common-place realities of present policy, and dazzled Mr. Canning, with the bright halo of glorious recollections. But this I must say, that a people more unlike those brave, capricious, turbu-

lent, unjust, seditious, liberty-loving, high-souled Greeks of the olden time; full of genius, learning, philosophy, wisdom; animated by the very soul of poetry and the arts; and worshipping with passionate instinct, the spirit of the beautiful and the grand, I never saw nor can imagine, than are your people of modern Greece; and I do not believe, that your kingdom of Greece will be of long endurance, or that it will turn out anything better than a Russian province, as different from ancient Greece as Themistocles from Sir Edward Codrington. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen will observe, that I merely indicate a difference, I do not wish to insinuate an inferiority. But, then, is it not curious, to say the least of it, that we should then have fought, and paid, and struggled, to wrest from Turkey her Grecian provinces, lying at the very gates of Constantinople, and from which she drew the best sailors of her fleets and that we should now fight and pay and struggle to restore to her, her Syrian Provinces, situated much more remotely, and from which I will undertake to say, from a pretty accurate knowledge of the various little independent nations which inhabit them, the Druses, the Maronites, the Ansaeri, the Moutoualis, the Bedouins of Samaria, differing as they do in habits, religion, and origin—Turkey will derive little else than the necessity of contending with an ever-renewing insurrection. But the classic recollections of Greece spoke perhaps more powerfully than the hallowed memories of Jerusalem. And now a word about your foreign policy with regard to France, and your settlement of the Eastern question, to which I do wish for a moment to allude, as it is that which we are told has covered you with glory. Now first as regards France. She has during your whole administration been carrying on a war of most unjust aggression on the Southern shores of the Mediterranean. The expedition against Algiers, for definite and restricted objects, took place when the Duke of Wellington was in office. But that illustrious man, foreseeing, with instinctive sagacity, the immense preponderance in the Mediterranean, which France might acquire from the conquest and permanent occupation of an extended line of coast, and of territories in themselves of inexhaustible richness and fertility, the granary in fact of the ancient Roman empire, required and obtained a pledge that no purpose was entertained of lasting conquest, and that the occupation should not

be permanent. Now it seems to me that such a pledge having been required and given, the honour, as well as the interests, of England, demanded that we should call for its fulfilment. [*Hear, hear.*] Have you made any such call? Have you taken any step to put an end to that fierce unjust, and bloody war of extermination with which France is now devastating the fertile, and, as against France, unoffending provinces of Mauritania and Numidia. If you have not, you have neglected your duty to England. [*Hear, hear.*] I can conceive but one excuse which you may offer, you may tell us that this African war proves and will prove a source of weakness and exhaustion to France. I know it does; I am persuaded it will. But will you really dare to offer such an excuse to England and to Europe? If you do, I shall accuse you of violating your duty to humanity. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, I know makes light of humanity. Like the fine gentleman who was asked by a beggar for a half-penny, he has heard of the coin, but never seen it. But I tell you, that the war now carried on by France against the Moors and Arabs in those provinces is the same in principle and object as that carried on in other times by the Spaniards in South America, and at this day, to their shame, by the United States of North America against the original tribes of the native Indians—a war unprovoked—a war of extermination; and I say, that if you have taken no step to arrest it, you have shrunk from the performance of your duty to humanity. But now, as to your settlement of the Eastern question to which you appeal in a tone so confident and triumphant. That the soldiers and sailors of England would maintain untarnished and with added lustre the honour of the British arms, established on a thousand fields, confirmed wherever our fleets have floated upon the sea, I, for one, never doubted; but does that justify the policy which led to the sacrifice of many gallant lives, to the shedding of much noble blood, and to no inconsiderable expenditure of the national treasure. The unprincipled ambition, the restless and reckless personal vanity of M. Thiers did seem at last to render necessary some decided measures. But whose fault was it; by whose procrastination and delay that the ambition and personal vanity of M. Thiers found the occasion of creating this necessity? Why, yours, and yours only—that whole question by the exercise of a common

discretion and of the ordinary influence of England—though I grant that your long coquetting with treason and revolution wherever they showed themselves had lessened your influence in Europe—but still you might by a little energy in a right direction have settled that question before M. Thiers was heard of. And then, at what a risk to the peace of Europe and the world did you at last effect its settlement? For months, thanks to your policy, peace and war hung trembling on the balance, and we were brought to the very verge of a conflict which would have shaken the order and civilization of the world to its centre. And because a wise and merciful Providence interposed, as if by miracles, to allay and still that madness of the people—because M. Guizot was sent with his "*Motos præstat componere fluctus*," to restrain and chain up the winds of passion and violence which you, by your policy, had let loose, you take credit, forsooth, for the wisdom and foresight of your course, and the hon. Member for Meath crowns you with laurel for your settlement of the Eastern question. And then, Sir, I cannot forget, that the power against which you have thought fit to display your warlike energies was a power not unfriendly, not hostile to England—that good-natured old gentleman, as the noble Lord, the Member for South Lancashire called him, expressed to me, many years ago his admiration and love of England, and his conviction of the paramount importance to himself of acquiring and retaining her favor and protection, and certainly no British subject who has entered the territories over which he bore sway had ever any reason to doubt the sincerity of such professions. I therefore doubt, as far as the policy of England was concerned, the wisdom at such cost, and such enormous risk, of driving him out of Syria. I don't believe that if he had succeeded in becoming an important power, he would have leant to France rather than England. I believe the very reverse. I am quite persuaded that the nominal possession of Syria, for it is nothing more—will not add to the strength of Turkey, or to her power of resisting Russia when it suits Russia in earnest to set about swallowing her up. Why the Turks themselves believe, that this fate is reserved for them. I was shown in the Mosque of St. Sophia a sort of fresco, which the Turks, who tolerate in their temples no paintings, had, as they said, repeatedly endeavoured to efface, but which

always re-appeared, and would re-appear till the Christians returned again to restore it to its pristine honour. Why it is vain to try to uphold a power, as a great power, whose people have thus in anticipation yielded up their capital. I fear, therefore, that your settlement will be of short duration, and then, as regards the peace and tranquillity, and the security to life of the inhabitants of Syria, under the one regime or the other. Why, I say, and say positively, and from my own experience, that the balance was as 100 to one in favour of the rule of Egypt. The hon. Member for Meath would give it against Egypt, because he abominates a strong Government; but I much question whether the people of Syria, liberty and freedom being alike out of the question in both cases, will not be losers by the change. Mind, I don't say you should have interfered to aid the rebellion of the Pasha. I merely deny, that you were called on, either by considerations of English policy or considerations connected with the happiness of Syria, to interfere at such cost and risk to suppress it. If I did not feel, that it would be trespassing too long on the attention of the House, I could relate to them one or two little adventures which happened to me in Syria when the power of the Sultan was more established in it than it ever will be again, and I would leave to the noble Lord to describe the state in which he found it under the domination of Egypt, and I would leave the House to decide which was most favourable to the peace and prosperity of that country—liberty, as I have before said, being alike in both cases of the question. But I have already detained the House too long on this matter of the Eastern policy of the noble Lord. My right hon. Friend the Member for Pembroke, has disposed of the question of China, and the noble Lord is welcome to whatever laurels he may gather for the disputed boundary in North America, and to whatever credit he may claim for his prompt and effectual interference in the case of Mr. M'Leod, and so I pass from the foreign policy of the noble Lord. But then its domestic administration—on that the right hon. Member for Edinburgh peculiarly prizes himself—they may have failed as legislators—that, in fact, seems admitted, and will not deny proving the first proposition of the right hon. Baronet. "But look," says the right hon. Gentleman, how we have managed matters at home, and executed the laws which we found

in existence." Now really the boldness of the right hon. Gentleman did astonish me. Why, had the right hon. Gentleman forgotten the Chartist insurrection, and Chartist demonstrations, where they did not break out into actual insurrection, which besides the insecurity, the alarm, the misery, which they occasioned in the parts of the country which were more immediately the scenes of them, did also, as well as the insurrection in Canada, invited and encouraged by one of their most favoured supporters, occasion no small expense to suppress and guard against its recurrence. But not to revert to a matter which has been already alluded to in the debate, and which I am the more unwilling to do in consequence of the absence of the noble Lord, on whose conduct I should reluctantly animadvert when he was not present to defend himself; will the House permit me to say a few words on a matter exclusively referring to Scotland, and one of paramount importance to that country. The right hon. Member for Edinburgh took credit, as I have said, for the way in which the Government had administered the existing laws. Now, did the right hon. Gentleman include in his commendation the administration of the law as connected with those unhappy dissensions which now rend the Church of Scotland. Hon. Members are not perhaps aware to what an extent the mind of Scotland is distracted and agitated by those dissensions,—dissensions by which the peace and tranquillity of that part of the empire is exposed to considerable hazard. Now, I am not now going to enter into any discussion of the relative merits of one or the other of the parties in that melancholy dispute. My own mind has been long and fully made up on the subject, and I have not scrupled to declare it on all fitting occasions; but I should be doing injustice to both parties, if I attempted, at the conclusion of a speech which has already occupied so much of the time of the House, to state the grounds on which that opinion rests. I know that English Members are not so informed regarding it as that they should now understand it if stated in a cursory or superficial way, and, therefore, I will not enter into its merits at all. But this I will say, that had the law as it exists, been promptly and honestly carried into execution, those unhappy disputes, which threaten the Church with schism, and the people with the loss of an establishment,

which has, in times past, rendered the most important services, and conferred the greatest benefits on Scotland, would never have assumed their present intensity and force. But whatever may be thought of the conduct of that party which stands out in resistance to the civil authorities of the State, and I am not here to extenuate or defend that resistance, this I will say, that they have been most unfairly and shabbily used by the present Ministers of the Crown. The Government, I say, led them into their present position; it was with the sanction and by the advice of those Members of the Government connected with Scotland; and who are there looked up to as speaking the opinions of the Government, the Lord Advocate, and Solicitor-general, that the now dominant party in the Church passed the veto law, in which all these confusions originated. When it was declared illegal, and “*ultra vires*,” of the Church, as interfering with statute law, had not the party which had adopted it at the suggestion of the Government, a right to expect, that a legislative sanction should have been obtained for that or a similar measure. And why was that natural expectation disappointed? Why was that straightforward and manly course not followed? Simply, because of the weakness of the Government. They were too weak to be honest [*Hear, hear!*]. They feared, that their supporters, the Dissenters, would be alienated by any step which looked like a desire to uphold the Established Church, or to extricate her from her difficulties; that many of their friends within the Church were opposed to such a measure as their subordinates had suggested; and so they fell back on their usual expedient of leaving things alone, and doing nothing. But this wrong and dishonest determination was a sort of necessary consequence of their weakness as a Government; nor can I conceive a stronger fact in support of the motion of my right hon. Friend, or one which more conclusively demonstrates the evil to all parties, and to the State, which is above all parties, of a Government unable to carry, and so not daring to propose measures which it deems essential to the peace and well-being of the country [*Hear, hear!*]. In the mean time, the Government declares it will maintain the law; and how does it set about it? The noble Lord, at the head of the Government, expresses strongly his disapproval of the proceedings of the predominant party in the Church. My hon. Friend, opposite, the Under Secretary of State,

opens wide his arms to embrace them, and, in the mean time, the church patronage of the Crown—a part of the prerogative not surely given for purposes of mere party patronage in its use, or for currying favour with any class by abstaining from its exercise, but for great and sacred purposes—is left in entire abeyance under some new-fangled fashion of giving a laet to be scrambled for wherever a Crown presentation happens to become vacant. But now, Sir, before I conclude, I would beg, as a Member representing a purely agricultural constituency, to advert to a matter in which they are deeply interested—I mean, of course, the Corn-laws. The agitation of that question, at the present moment, is another consequence of the financial difficulties in which, by their incapacity, the Government have involved us. Look for a moment at the past methods to which they have had recourse, for remedying those difficulties—what has been their practice?—really, if it were not notorious it would appear incredible [*Hear, hear!*]. No sooner was it ascertained, that a deficiency existed in the revenue, than they met it in two ways—first, by the repeal of taxation, next by the increase of expenditure—the first of these expedients was rendered necessary, in hopes of tiding over some emergency of discontent, to conciliate some class of their supporters out of doors;—the second was required, besides the necessity of meeting the increased expenditure which their impolicy had created, to secure by the creation of all sorts of jobbing commissions and employment, the wavering fidelity of their supporters in this House, by rewarding the services of those who did their work at elections. And when at last they came to a dead lock, when all their expedients fail them, when the conviction of their misgovernment is forced on the minds of all, and the danger into which that misgovernment has brought the country, has created a universal longing for their expulsion from office, they come down with a set of propositions, for I will not call it a budget, whose only object seems to be to create universal confusion, and by arraying in fierce hostility all the great interests of the country one against the other, to distract attention from the real causes of evils, which, having raised, they are afraid to face, and incapable of remedying [*Hear, hear!*—their past delinquencies are thrown into the shade by this last effort of their despair, which I

do not hesitate to call the most reckless, the most unwise, the most mischievous, project ever submitted by any government of which history gives us an example. Sir, I do not hesitate to express strongly the feelings which I strongly entertain—this is no time for hesitation. In my opinion, the salvation of the country demands their expulsion from power, which they use for purposes so fraught with danger and ruin to the State. They are no longer in the position of constitutional Ministers. After their repeated defeats, their remaining in office is at variance with the spirit of the Constitution—as though incapable of good, they are capable, fatally capable, as their Corn-law proposition sufficiently proves, of much evil. Defeated on the first of their propositions—that which the House rejected from a conviction of its tendency to revive the slave-trade, and increase the horrors of slavery—they come down to the House as if nothing unusual had occurred, and the noble Lord quietly announces his intention of proceeding with his attack on the Corn-laws. Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer not persevere in his intention of fishing for a Budget in the St. Lawrence? I could assure him indeed, that he would be unsuccessful, that he would have had no sport—but that, he may say, is his affair not mine. What I should complain of, however, is his compelling us on this side of the House to remain and carry his empty basket, and I do trust, that he may be persuaded, that it is useless to continue to lash the water with a line from which the hook has snapped off, and in a stream so troubled, that even if he had one, the greediest bull Trout would scarce think of looking at it. Do you go on with your Timber Duties? No? Then you think you will find in the Corn-laws a more profitable field of agitation. I warn you of your mistake. I know you will endeavour to represent this as a landlord's question—but it is not with the landlords only that you will have to do. In the counties which I have the honour to represent, there is scarce a single farm which is not let on lease—the same is the case in Scotland generally—the usual term of those leases is for nineteen years—if the landlords are to be ruined, the tenants holding on such leases will not go scathless. Relying on their leases, many of them at their commencement have invested their capital on improvements to be repaid during, or at the expiry of their leases. Do you see no injustice to that numerous and most useful

class in the confiscation of their capital which your duty of 3s. 4d. on the quarter of oats will effect? Why your protection will scarce pay the freight of their grain from the shores of the Moray Firth to London. You are not aware—how should you be aware, who for the last four years have thought of nothing but the retention of office—that great efforts are now making in Scotland, by reclaiming waste lands by furrow-draining, and the use of the sub-soil plough—an expensive operation performed generally at the sole expense of the tenant—to improve a country less favoured in soil and climate, than your own. You are aware that the example of those spirited efforts is re-acting most beneficially on England. Do you think it a matter of no importance in a national point of view, to suspend and paralyse those exertions, and thus to throw out of employment vast masses of agricultural labourers, to be precipitated on your already over-peopled manufacturing towns [*Hear, hear*]. If you would leave us alone, we should soon so increase the amount of our produce, and so diminish the cost of its production as to make us independent of any thing beyond a very limited protection, and while we adhered to the fluctuating scale, to assent to a considerable reduction as regards the point at which foreign corn might be admitted on merely nominal duties; but by your constant tampering with this great question, you defer indefinitely the period at which we could do so without great pressure on existing interests. Nor is it only the interest of the landlords and tenants and agricultural interest which your profligate proposal, if carried out, would bring into jeopardy.—You call it a class interest.—Why the whole class of tradesmen in our towns,—in all, save the great manufacturing cities, would be involved in the common ruin. Nor those alone—the retired tradesman, the industrious mechanic, all those persons living respectably on small fixed incomes throughout the country, who have invested, as they had a right to do, their capital on the security of land, in preference to investing it in gambling speculations in foreign funds or railway adventures, would alike suffer,—unless the noble Lord has in reserve some plan by which the interest of their capital may be recovered from the rentless estates of the ruined landlords.—But, Sir, I shall not now pretend to enter at length into the question of the Corn-laws—other opportunities of doing

so are promised us. But I see in the proposal of the Government a source of wide-spreading desolation, involving immense classes of the community; and I should like to know, when that desolation shall have swept over them, what will become of that home market for the productions of your manufacturing industry, which is now its best stimulus and reward. I trust, however, that the good sense of the country, and that instinct of honesty which induces the people of this country to treat as pirates those who sail under false colours, will reject not only these mischievous proposals, but the still more mischievous proposers of them, and thanking the House sincerely for the indulgence with which it has listened to me, I shall give my cordial support to the motion of my right hon. Friend.

Sir William Somerville had never listened to a more extraordinary oration than that just delivered by the hon. Gentleman. He one moment called the attention of the House to the situation of the Moors in Algiers, in the next he travelled to Jerusalem, and dwelt on the situation of the Syrians; he next proceeded to France, and after a dissertation on the politics of that country, he jumped round to Mehemet Ali and Egypt; in the next moment, he favoured the House with a parallel between Themistocles and Sir Edward Codrington. The hon. Member then travelled to China, and to a number of other places. It was quite out of the question to follow the hon. Gentleman throughout his very discursive speech; he should, therefore, proceed to make some remarks on the question immediately before the House. He believed that no representatives were more interested in the decision the House should come to, on this question than the Members from Ireland, for with that country it was almost a question of life and death. He would not touch on the constitutional part of the question, as that had been dwelt on at length by those who could much better handle it than himself. They were asked then to withdraw their confidence from the Government, either in consequence of acts which they had committed, or in anticipation of a part which her Majesty's Ministers were about to take. The measures of the Government had been less touched on in the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth than he had anticipated, but the right hon. Baronet and those who followed him on

the opposite side had, in their endeavour to show the weakness of the policy of the Government, pointed out how much they had been warped by the exertions of the party opposite, and that they had been unable to carry their measures with large majorities. He believed that, in the present state of parties in that House and in the country, they were not likely for some time to meet with a Government which could command a large majority, but that, whatever administration was in office they would be obliged to modify their measures to a certain extent to suit the views of those who were partially opposed to them. He could not help complaining of the manner in which his own country had been alluded to by some Gentlemen opposite in the course of the present discussion, and he should always protest, while he was a Member of this House, against the manner in which Irish questions were made mere stalking-horses for place. He had always been anxious to unite the two countries in the strictest and most solid ties; and he was sure that this could never be done while such a system continued. He deeply regretted the allusions which he had heard made to the appropriation question that evening, and he was sure that Gentlemen opposite were not aware of the danger there was in twitting and taunting her Majesty's Ministers for abandoning that clause. They should remember that it was recorded in the journals of the House, that there could be no satisfactory settlement of the tithe question, until that principle was adopted and acted upon. Were these hon. Gentlemen sure that by such allusions they would not re-animate and re-open the agitation on this question? He confessed that, beyond his hope and expectations, there was now a state of peace in that country with regard to this question, but he feared and dreaded that those times would again occur, and he hoped that they would not be rapidly hastened by the indiscreet mode in which the subject was alluded to by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire a short time ago, had alluded to this question, and had dwelt on the inconsistency of the Government with regard to it. Now, the noble Lord should be the last person in that House to taunt any hon. Gentleman with inconsistency on this subject. The noble Lord had talked of exciting false hopes on this subject, and

the first person who proposed the appropriation question was the noble Lord himself, and he was the first to abandon it. The noble Lord, immediately after having proposed it, came down to the House, while the public mind was greatly excited on the subject, and told the people, as a Member of the Government, that it was the intention of the then Ministers to extinguish tithes once and for ever. A few days afterwards, however, the noble Lord said by the extinguishment of tithe, he did not mean, strictly speaking, the extinguishment of tithe, but something else. He was astonished, therefore, what the noble Lord could mean when he came down to the House and said, that the Government had excited false hopes and expectations of the people on this subject, merely for the sake of disappointing them. Instead of being the first man to bring such charges, he should be the very last, and he was the man from whom those on that (the Ministerial) side of the House should expect forbearance. The noble Lord also came forward with a bill, nominally for the registration of voters in Ireland, which, if, passed, would render anything like good Government in that country impossible. He had no hesitation in declaring, that if the option was left to him whether to take the system propounded in the bill, or whether the representative system of Government in Ireland should be altogether set aside, he would have the latter. In the latter case, there might be some chance of justice, but under the noble Lord's bill, in spite of all his exertions, they would have the re-establishment, were it possible, in a worse form, of the old ascendancy; and the noble Lord would be the first to be frightened at the monster of his own creation, and shrink from the evils which he had occasioned. For his own part, he did not believe that the noble Lord ever sincerely expected to carry his Registration bill; and if this was the case, why come forward this year, as he did last, and excite the feelings of the people of Ireland. If this was the case, as he firmly believed it was, why did the noble Lord come forward, and taunt the Government with having brought forward measures which they did not expect to carry, but had introduced with the view of exciting public feeling? If, as had been alleged, the power of carrying measures rested with the party opposite, why did they not exert it in attempting to carry the noble Lord's Regis-

tration Bill? If the noble Lord came into office, as he, no doubt, would, if the right hon. Baronet should succeed in attaining power, did he mean to carry his Registration Bill? He should like the people of Ireland to know whether the accession of the noble Lord to office was to deprive them of their rights and privileges. It appeared to him that this resolution had been proposed to the House more on account of the new measures which her Majesty's Ministers had introduced than in consequence of their past conduct. He would not allude to the sugar duties, as that question had already been disposed of for this Session; nor would he trouble the House with any observations on the timber duties; but he would make some remarks upon the question of the Corn-laws, in regard to which he, as an Irish landowner, was interested. He had always sincerely stated, and he had ever acted upon the principle, that he would not vote contrary to the decision of his own mind on a question simply because the Government proposed it. He should not vote on this question in a contrary way to that which he had always voted, although he was largely interested as a landowner and agriculturist. He had always hitherto voted on this question with his hon. Friend the Member for Wolverhampton, for he had never been able to see the great and extensive, and manifold blessings which they enjoyed under the present system. What portion of the community prospered under the present system? Was it the landowners? He would ask the landlords whether their property was not more secure, whether rents were not better paid, and whether it was not more valuable than it was a few years ago, when corn was three times the price which it is at present? When corn was three times the price, namely, in 1826, 1827, and 1828, was property nearly so secure or valuable in Ireland? He was told also that with the alteration of the Corn-laws the wages of labour would fall; but he knew that when the price of corn was lower in Ireland, the labourer was better paid, and altogether better off. It was said, also, that the poorer classes of his countrymen would be injured, and he believed, from communications with the smaller tenantry, that the proposed change would better their condition, and at the same time render the property of the landlords more secure. The noble Earl had that night

said, that the wheat of Ireland was of a worse quality, and that it would be more injurious to the agriculturists than if they had not the English market secured to them. Was this an argument for the continuance of the system—that corn was to be continued to be brought to the market of this country because it was bad, and that it must be mixed with a better quality, and that the people must be forced to eat it at a high price? He was sure such a mode of reasoning could have little weight with any one. He believed, that if they got rid of the Corn-laws, it would do more than anything else to get rid of that slovenly system of farming which he was sorry to say, existed in many parts of Ireland. He was aware that he stood nearly alone as an Irish landlord in the opinions which he entertained on the subject, but he had not adopted them for the occasion, for ever since he had had a seat in the House he had voted against the present system. When he first voted for the motion of his hon. Friend, the Member for Wolverhampton, he received several letters from various quarters, many of them anonymous, asking him whether he was really mad. Several of his hon. Friends opposite, perhaps, thought that this opinion was not far from the mark, but he really and sincerely entertained the conviction that the adoption of the measures of the Government would be in the highest degree, beneficial to both England and Ireland. He had always spoken with respect of the right hon. Baronet, and of the comparative moderation of his views; but the truth was, if he took office, he would be obliged to follow in the wake of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, the adoption of whose measures would be destructive to the peace of the country, and there could be no doubt that the noble Lord was to form a part of the embryo Government of the other side. He heard the other evening the right hon. Member for Pembroke plume himself and those with whom he acted on the damage which they had done to all the bills which had been brought forward for the improvement of Ireland. Was this, he would ask, the mode in which the right hon. Baronet intended to recommend his party to the people of Ireland. It was extraordinary that the right hon. Gentleman, who formerly entertained such extreme Whiggish opinions, should now allude with so much

satisfaction to the attempt which he and the noble Lord had made, to add a few pounds to the value of the franchise. He believed that the country could not be governed on these extreme opinions. He recollected, with great pain, the attempts made in 1839 to get up an extreme no-popery cry. He recollected that the present hon. and learned Member for Woodstock was selected as the crack candidate of the day, to oppose the Solicitor-general at Newark, and who called certain Members of that House, popery Members. He talked of a Member of this description belonging to the Admiralty. [*Cries of "Question."*] He contended that it was to the question, as it showed the feeling that was entertained with respect to the admission of a Catholic to the Privy Council. Allusion was also made to the disgrace of the Treasury bench, and other observations of a similar character. He could not hear the use of such language, by a Gentleman of such standing with his party as the hon. and learned Member, and believe that a Government in Ireland composed of Gentlemen opposite, could be carried on in a spirit of moderation. He did not see how the right hon. Baronet could control his partizans who gave him their confidence and support. He did not intend to say anything offensive in the observations which he had made, but he thought it to be the duty of every Gentleman to state his opinions fairly and openly. As long as he had a seat in that House, he should only look to what he regarded to be beneficial to the country, and believing, as he did, the measures of the Government to be beneficial, he should not shrink from supporting them.

Captain *Hamilton* would acknowledge the consistency of the hon. Baronet who had just spoken, but he could not agree in that hon. Baronet's views of the Corn-laws; for it did not appear how low prices for food would increase the wages of the labourer. That principle, at least, would not be understood here. The present question, however, was well understood by the people of England. They understood the question to be, whether her Majesty's Ministers deserved the confidence of the House of Commons; and they knew that on the measures of the budget, Ministers certainly did not deserve that confidence. The day had gone by when mere forensic declamation would work its way with the people of England. The working people of



England read the speeches of Sir Robert Peel as well as those of Lord John Russell, and those other hon. Gentlemen at the Ministerial side of the House. And what was more than that, the people of England now understood what they read. He did not, however, think, that the people of England did understand those Parliamentary conventional rules by which they would endeavour, in this House, to make what was black appear perfectly white. He would ask whether such a course of conduct as had been pursued by the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, was not calculated to stultify the promises which had been previously made to the electors of Lincolnshire? He was of opinion, that the sooner a dissolution would come, the better would it be for the country. [*Cheers.*] He was glad to hear the hon. Gentlemen opposite cheer that observation; but he was strongly of opinion that they would not cheer so loudly this day six months. Much had been said with respect to the distresses of the country. No man lamented more than he did such a state of things; but, he would ask, had not their late embarrassments in America something to do in creating those distresses? And, above all things, had not the deplorable misgovernment of this country something to do in the creation of this distress? He predicted that this Ministerial scheme of cheap bread would be immediately followed by a proportional reduction in the price of labour. He denied, therefore, that this could be considered as a boon conferred upon the working classes. This scheme might answer very well for the purpose of agitation, but in no other way could it serve their purposes, or the interests of the country. He did not think that the electors of England were represented in England. They might agitate the country upon the subject of the Corn-laws—they might put off the settlement of the Poor-law question—they might raise any popular cry they pleased, but the people of England would soon show them what their opinion was upon the motion now before the House. The people of England would see that her Majesty's Government had carried out the principle of self-preservation too far, and they would see that they had sacrificed the interests of the country to the selfish motive of keeping their places.

Mr. Muntz said, that the hon. Member who had just sat down stated the question

to be, whether that House had confidence in her Majesty's Ministers? but in his opinion that was not the only question; the other question was, whether the House had confidence in the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, and his friends on the opposite side of the House? and he (Mr. Muntz) must say, that he for one had not the slightest confidence in them. He well remembered them in office ten years before, and did all in his power to remove them, because they governed so badly that no one could live in comfort under them; and he could not find that they had the least improved either in their principles, their manners, or their conversation, since that time. They had not held out the slightest inducement to vote them into office; there was no sign of their intentions to repeal the Corn-laws, nor the Money-laws, nor to do any thing for the relief of the distressed population, and therefore he could not give the motion of the right hon. Baronet his support; but if he would propose something better than had been done by the Government, he would be the last man to oppose him, as he considered himself sent there for the good of the country, and not to support the party on either side. He did not say that the Government had his confidence, [*Hear, hear.*—but the reason they had not was, because they so closely followed all the principles and practices of their predecessors. The right hon. Baronet had said that he would not make any bidding for popularity, and he (Mr. Muntz) could understand his feelings upon that subject; but, in his opinion, there was a great difference between bidding for popularity and explaining the principles upon which he intended to carry on the government of a great nation, and he thought the House had a right to expect some declaration upon the subject. He felt that the country was very much in the position of the fox in the fable, and as he had not heard one sentence which promised relief to the people by a change of measures, he thought they had better keep the full fleas which they now had upon them, than remove them to be replaced by empty ones, he should, therefore, under such circumstances, give his vote in favour of Ministers.

Colonel Conolly, in rising to support the motion of the right hon. Baronet, would ask the House this question; if the present Ministry had brought this country into its present difficulties, and

were unable to extricate it from them, what pretence could they have for remaining in office and calling upon hon. Members at his side of the House to enable them to get themselves out of their difficulties? The hon. Gentlemen opposite arrogated to themselves the right of remaining in office until the hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House stated the particular course they would pursue were they entrusted with the reins of Government. He thought, that her Majesty's Ministers could not pursue a more dangerous course than the one they were following. It was a course well calculated to encourage the agitation in Ireland for a repeal of the union. The Ministry appeared to make a boast of having extinguished slavery in their colonies; but he thought they were not entitled to any credit for the abolition of slavery, as that measure did not originate with them. The Ministry had thrown every branch of industry and manufacture completely over in defiance of their own assurances and their former pledges to the contrary, simply because they had been driven into this course by the late divisions against them. As the right hon. Baronet had expressed it, they had set on fire the premises before they left it. By their calumnies and misrepresentations, they were driving the agricultural interest against the manufacturing classes. But his party was powerful enough to arrest them in this course, which was degrading in itself, and calculated to injure the country in every particular. While there was still a lower hell they appeared willing to sink into it. There was not a lower state of degradation that they would not be willing to resort to. They had administered the affairs of the country in a most execrable manner. They were leaving it in a state of insolvency, and they were now unable to get themselves out of the scrape they had brought themselves into. They had not even the decency of decorating their proposed alterations with common caution or decency.

Debate again adjourned.

House adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, June 4, 1841.

[MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Assessed Taxes Compositions.—Read a second time:—Stamp Duties; Law Proceedings.—Read a third time:—Victoria Park.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of Aberdeen, the Marquess of Bute, the Duke of Buccleugh, and the Earl of Powis, from Aberdeen, Oxfordshire, Melrose, Huntingdon, and other places, against Alteration in the Corn-laws.—By the Marquess of Anglesen, the Marquess of Normanby, the Earl of Radnor, Viscount Melbourne, Earl Fitzwilliam, Earl Stanhope, and other noble Lords, from Burton-upon-Trent, Kingston-upon-Hull, Uxbridge, Dunstable, Derby, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.

### CORN-LAWS — WAGES — PETITIONS.]

Lord *Braybrooke* presented thirty-seven petitions from places in Essex and Berkshire, against any alteration in the Corn-laws. The noble Lord observed, that in some of the petitions it was stated, and he believed the statement to be correct, that the agricultural labourers would rather have dear bread, and fair wages to pay for it, than cheap bread, with deteriorated and inferior wages.

The Earl of *Radnor* wished to know from his noble Friend what amount of wages the labourers who expressed this opinion were now receiving.

Lord *Braybrooke* said, he was not prepared to answer the question at that moment; but if his noble Friend wished for statistical information, he would be most happy to furnish it on a future occasion.

The Earl of *Radnor* said, as his noble Friend had stated, that in one of the petitions a certain opinion was set forth, he ought to have possessed himself of information as to the situation of those who had signed it. When such statements were made, he always wished the chapter and verse to be pointed out, whereby they could be verified. Those parties, it appeared, expressed an opinion that high wages always accompanied dear bread, and that low wages, on the contrary, were always the result of cheap bread. Now, he should like to know when that state of things had occurred?

Earl *Stanhope* said, he could inform the noble Earl. If the noble Earl would turn to the King's Speech in 1825, he would find it there stated, that the country was in a situation of ample prosperity. Wheat was then 75s. the quarter. In 1835-36, wheat was at 36s. the quarter, but in the Speech from the Throne, nothing was said about the prosperity of the country. On the contrary, the agricultural labourers were in a state of extreme want. He spoke of the labourers, because he wished to treat this as a labourer's, and not as a landlord's, question. At the time to which he last referred, 1835-36, the labouring classes suffered severely, though corn was

cheap, from want of employment. Much distress now prevailed in the country, and the measure which Ministers proposed could not, by possibility, confer any benefit on the nation. The only way in which it could benefit the manufacturer, for whose special service it was intended, would be by enabling him to lower the rate of wages. He thanked the noble Earl opposite (Radnor) and his noble Friend, (Earl Fitzwilliam), who sat below the noble Earl, for giving their Lordships an opportunity for incidentally discussing this question. He wished their opinions to be recorded daily, for the purpose of refuting the sophistries which were employed by those who called for the repeal of the Corn-laws, and of repelling the calumnies that were directed against those by whom they were supported. He was anxious that the country should be enlightened as to the real merits of the question; believing that with respect to it, as with respect to every other question, truth was great, and would finally prevail.

The Earl of Radnor said, he also liked discussion, and he hoped that the noble Earl would bring this question forward. He differed from the noble Earl as to his statement of the prosperity of 1825, when corn was dear, and the distress of 1835-36, when corn was cheap. Whether there was such prosperity or not in 1825 he could not say, and he wished to learn from the noble Earl where he arrived at the knowledge of its existence? [Earl Stanhope: In the King's Speech.] Well, where was the proof of the great distress of the labourer in 1836? The landowners and farmers at that time certainly cried out, and Parliamentary Committees were appointed to investigate the subject. Landowners were examined before those committees, but not one single labourer. In 1835, the Poor-law Amendment Bill was passed. (that bill which the noble Earl always described as having ruined the labouring classes), but it had not come into operation; so that the noble Earl could not attribute to that source the distress of which he had spoken. The only inference he could draw from what the noble Earl had stated was this, that the consumers of corn suffered by having corn cheap; a doctrine to which, he believed the consumers would not give their assent.

Earl Fitzwilliam: The noble Lord opposite had said, that the only way in which an alteration of the Corn-laws would benefit

the manufacturers was, by enabling them to lower the rate of wages. Now, he would take leave to differ on that point from the noble Earl. The objection which he felt to the Corn-laws, in a commercial point of view, was, because they had a tendency to interrupt the intercourse between this and other countries, and thus to prevent the extensive dissemination of our manufactures, on which the constant and profitable employment of the workmen, in a great measure, depended. Saying to other nations, "We won't take your corn," was precisely the same thing as saying, "We won't let you have our manufactures;" since, by a return in corn alone could payment be made. It was in this manner that the Corn-laws operated prejudicially in a commercial point of view, and their removal would benefit the manufacturer, by extending the market for his industry.

Earl Stanhope said, the observation which he had made was put forward by those who were most clamorous for the repeal of the Corn-laws. The doctrine was avowed by one of them at a public meeting. That individual openly said, "Without a repeal of the Corn-laws we shall never be able to beat down the wages of the workman." With respect to what the noble Earl had said, relative to the Committee of 1836, he was aware that the fact was as the noble Earl had stated. But that did not affect his argument; because he was convinced that no instance could be pointed out in which, while the landlord suffered, the labourer did not suffer in the same degree; and he maintained that a low price of corn was always accompanied by a low rate of wages. With respect to this question, the present Government evinced the greatest vacillation and inconsistency. Though not a Chartist, he would rather be ruled by the Chartists than by such a Government; for the Chartists were, at all events, consistent. Were Ministers prepared to state, as they ought to be, the price at which foreign corn could be imported into this country? Could they answer too—not from the representations of idle theorists, or vain speculators, or persons calling themselves political economists—but from information afforded by men conversant with business, trade and manufactures—what would be the effect of a considerable reduction in the price of corn? He could inform the Government, that in the year

1830, Mr. Saunders stated, that wheat could be imported from Hamburgh at an expense of 3s. or 4s. per quarter. If this were the fact, what would become of the wheat of Ireland? He admitted that the repeal of the Corn-laws would not throw land out of cultivation, but rent must be paid in produce. A state of barter would necessarily follow, and this would be attended not only with inconvenience to the landed proprietors, but with ruin to the monied classes. He should like to see the noble Lord (Viscount Melbourne) attempt to collect the revenue in kind. Would the noble Viscount pay the public creditor in kind? The effect of the alteration would be to introduce bankruptcy amongst all classes of the community. The people were at that moment suffering severely. Redress must be granted, and soon, or it would be extorted by force. And did Ministers suppose that they were throwing oil on the troubled waves of popular discontent, when they were, in fact, taking measures that would increase the evil in a ten-fold degree? Was it at such a time as this, that the labourers, who would unquestionably be further impoverished by the measure proposed by the Government, were to be insultingly told, that they must rely on their own resources, or be left to the tender mercies of the execrable New Poor-law.

Earl *Ducie* did not agree with the noble Earl in the opinion, that a low price of corn necessarily produced a fall in wages. He maintained, that in the year 1835, when corn was low, the farmers had made more than in the three subsequent years of high prices.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, he thought the noble Earl opposite was very much mistaken when he stated the cost at which corn might be imported into this country. From the best information he had been able to obtain on the subject, he believed, that, generally speaking, the cost of freight and charges of corn from the ports of the north of Europe, could not be estimated at less than 9s. or 10s. a quarter. There was one point in the noble Earl's speech, which he considered of the greatest possible importance. The noble Earl said, that he did not consider that an importation of cheap corn would throw the lands of this country out of cultivation. This admission must afford a very great consolation to those of their Lordships who were disposed to object to the

proposal for altering the Corn-laws, under the apprehension, that it would throw the land and the cultivators of the land out of employ.

Earl *Stanhope* said, that he had said, that land would not be cultivated for rent.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, still this gratifying fact was admitted, that land would continue to be cultivated; and the produce would, in all probability, be as abundant as ever, notwithstanding the proposed alteration, the only difference being that it would not be cultivated for rent. But he thought, that the noble Earl was mistaken even upon this point, and that land would be cultivated for rent, though perhaps in some cases rents would have to suffer a reduction.

Earl *Stanhope* said, he believed the result would be to prevent any rent being paid, except in kind.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, the noble Earl had made a most extraordinary discovery, but not a more extraordinary one than this, which had been so often announced, that if we got corn from foreign countries, we must pay for it in gold. He would allow, that when we were not in the habit of obtaining corn from foreign countries and had only recourse to them for an occasional supply, we might have to pay in gold for it; but the case would be very different when we were in the habit of taking a supply of corn from foreign states. This regular importation of foreign corn would lead to an habitual commercial intercourse, which must result in our sending our manufactures, or bills, in exchange for the corn so imported.

Lord *Beaumont* said, that as a very recent Member of their Lordships' House, he felt, that it savoured somewhat of presumption in him to offer any observations to their Lordships on this important subject; but he felt, that he should not be doing justice to himself or the public if he abstained from expressing his sentiments in regard to it. It appeared to him, that this must be admitted to be a fact, that for every quarter of corn imported from Dantzic or any other foreign port, a quarter of home-grown corn must be displaced from the market; and when it came to a question of preferring one market to another, he would ask, would it not be more advantageous to the country to pay for that quantity of corn in any of the corn-mar-

kets of England, than in one of the markets abroad, if only for this reason, that the money would then be on the spot to be exchanged for other commodities? whereas the interchange which would go on, between this and a foreign country, would be much more remote and uncertain. But, he would ask, what proof there was that foreign countries, supposing we went to their markets for corn, would take our manufactures in return? And, even if they did so, would it not be in the shape of yarn and twist, and not in our articles of finished manufacture? It stood to reason, that foreign countries, which had the same interest in maintaining their local manufactures, as we had in ours, would never consent to throw out of employ the hands and the capital engaged in manufactures amongst them, and allow us to displace themselves in their own markets in articles of finished manufacture. There was another point, also, which struck him on this subject. Supposing, that foreign corn was at an average of 40s. a-quarter, and British grown corn at 60s. a-quarter, would it not follow, that for every quarter of corn exchanged for our manufactures, the manufacturer would only have disposed of 40s. worth of his goods, instead of 60s. worth, being a clear loss of one-third in his market? He regretted the attempts which had been made by those who advocated an alteration of the Corn-laws, to array the manufacturers against the agriculturists, as if their interests were distinct. This was not the course pursued by the supporters of the Corn-laws, who wished to protect the manufacturing as well as the agricultural interests, being well assured, that the one could not prosper if the other languished, and that the one could not be injured without the other. Upon these grounds it was, that he felt it his duty to support the present Corn-laws, and to resist the attempts projected by her Majesty's Government for their alteration. It was with much regret, that he, having for so short a time enjoyed the honour of a seat in their Lordships' House felt himself compelled to oppose, upon this subject, a Government in whose general policy he concurred. But he opposed this proposal to reduce the duty upon corn, because he knew, that it would afterwards only be considered the first step to a total repeal of it—a measure which, in his opinion, must be most de-

structive to all the best interests of the country.

Petitions laid on the Table.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* presented upwards of eighty petitions from places in Cambridgeshire against any alteration in the Corn-laws, one, he was instructed to state, was signed by labourers.

Lord *Godolphin*, having looked at the signatures of one of these petitions, said, that it appeared to be signed by persons belonging to his immediate neighbourhood, and of whom he could say, that they were generally so ill-informed, and so ignorant of the subject, that they would say black was white, if called upon to do so.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* said, he was astonished to hear a noble Lord rise up in this House, and declare of any men, his Lordship's immediate neighbours, that they were men of such a character, that they would declare black to be white, whenever it might suit the occasion.

Lord *Godolphin* said, he certainly did not think the parties who had signed this petition, were capable of understanding anything about the subject.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* said, that it was all matter of assumption for the noble Lord to say, that he believed these persons would vote any way, upon any given subject, to which they were invited even by the noble Lord himself, for it came to that also. But, he believed, the noble Lord had underrated the intellectual qualifications of these persons. He believed, that the people of the county of Cambridge were keenly alive to all that concerned their interests. Certainly no county in England was more distinguished for its skill and improvements in agriculture. They had laid out all their capital, and bestowed all their labour in this laudable enterprise; and he would challenge the noble Lord to point out any agricultural county in England, where more intelligence, industry, and zeal, had been displayed.

Earl *Stanhope* said, that he was grieved to hear the statement of the noble Lord opposite, and he believed it to be an unfounded calumny against the labouring population. He wished to ask the noble Earl (Earl Fitzwilliam) a question. He saw, that an itinerant Corn-law agitator, who bore what was once the *cligum et venerabile nomen* of Sidney Smith, had said, that the effect of a repeal of the

Corn-laws would be to lower the price of corn to 20s. a quarter. Now, he wished to ask the noble Earl whether he admitted that to be the fact?

Lord *Godolphin* said, that before his noble Friend answered the noble Earl's question, he must beg to state, that he never meddled with the political views of the labourers; but if he had taken the trouble which had been taken by other parties, he had no doubt he could have got as many petitions the other way as those which the noble Earl had presented.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, that he had nothing to do with Corn-law lecturers. It was enough for him to be responsible for his own opinions. The gentleman to whom the noble Lord referred, must be entirely mistaken, when he said, that corn could be introduced at 20s. a quarter. He would recommend the noble Earl (the Earl of *Hardwicke*) to call a county meeting, and then it would be seen what the opinions of the people were. He would like to ask the noble Earl, what kind of argument was addressed to these labourers to induce them to sign these petitions?

The Earl of *Hardwicke* said, he did not know, but he knew, that the opinion of the labourers was this, that they suffered during low prices, and that they stated, they were now very comfortable. That was about as much as they could be expected to know on this important question. These petitions were handed to him, as being worthy of the attention of the House, and with that knowledge he presented them. With respect to the suggestion of the noble Earl relative to calling a county meeting, he should imagine, that the great meeting last year sufficiently indicated the feeling of the country on the subject.

The Earl of *Mountcashel* said, he did not see what reason the noble Lords opposite had to quarrel with the petitions presented by the noble Earl (the Earl of *Hardwicke*). It must be in the recollection of the House, that a few nights ago, the noble Earl (Earl *Fitzwilliam*) presented a petition from a parcel of women, all of whom, with the exception of five, put marks in the place of signatures.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that he rose to order. It was contrary to the Standing Orders of the House, that a noble Lord should refer to what had taken place in a former debate on the subject.

He, therefore, thought, that the noble Earl might as well wait until the general subject was brought under discussion.

The Earl of *Mountcashel* said, that he stood corrected, but if the two noble Earls opposite (the Earls of *Radnor* and *Fitzwilliam*) persisted in discussing the question every night, he thought he had a right to make some few observations in reply to them.

Petitions laid on the Table.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, June 4, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—New South Wales; Western Australia.—Read a third time:—Frivolous Suits; Punishment of Death; Sugar Duties.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Neeld, Mr. Bell, Mr. Yorke, Sir E. Filmer, Mr. Darby, Mr. R. Hill, Sir H. Smith, Lord C. Manners, Mr. Q. Dick, Mr. Round, Mr. W. Duncombe, and other hon. Members, from Wiltshire, Northumberland, Isle of Ely, Kent, Sussex, Shropshire, Derby, Colchester, Essex, and a great many other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Bernal, Mr. Langdale, Mr. Holland, Mr. W. Evans, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. F. Maule, Mr. Erie, Mr. M. Phillips, Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Hutt, and other hon. Members, from Kent, Beverley, Derby, Lancashire, Oxford, Staffordshire, Buckingham, Hull, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.

CORN-LAWS.] Sir *E. Knatchbull* observed, that the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had a motion on the papers for that night, relating to the importation of foreign corn; but as the motion could not, probably, come on that evening, he begged that some Member of her Majesty's Government, in the absence of the noble Lord, would state on what day he intended to bring the question under the consideration of the House. It would be a very great convenience that they should be informed upon the subject.

Viscount *Palmerston* said, that his noble Friend would inform the House, before it separated, of the day on which he would bring forward his motion. He believed it would be Tuesday next, but he was not quite sure.

Sir *E. Knatchbull* said, that if the noble Lord could not furnish him with more accurate information on the subject, he must be content. He had not asked the question from any uncourteous motives, but it was a subject on the discussion of which a great deal of anxiety naturally prevailed, and he feared that if he had to wait until the noble Lord, the Secretary

for the Colonies, came into the House, it might be too late.

CANDIA.] Lord *Teignmouth*, seeing the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, in his place, wished to ask him whether he had taken any measures, in conformity with the declaration of the Allied Powers, to prevent the perpetration by the Turks, of cruelties on the Christian inhabitants of Candia?

Viscount *Palmerston* did not know to what declaration the noble Lord alluded, but he would state, that as soon as her Majesty's Government had received information of the troubles in Candia, they had dispatched instructions to our ambassador at Constantinople, directing him to use his utmost endeavours to prevail on the Turkish Government to enter into some arrangement with the Greek population of Candia, which, while on the one hand it should be satisfactory to the Turkish Government, should, on the other, give the Greek population of Candia full security for their persons and properties; and he had also been directed to urge the Turkish Government not to have recourse to measures more severe than should be absolutely necessary.

CONFIDENCE IN THE MINISTRY—  
ADJOURNED DEBATE (FIFTH DAY).]  
On the Order of the Day for the resumption of the adjourned debate being read,

Mr. *Steele* said, that the resolution proposed to the House by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, might be, he ventured to assert, a resolution which the right hon. Gentleman had been persuaded to propose by some of those advisers, in whom he conceived the experience of the right hon. Baronet might have taught him, that no very implicit confidence was to be reposed. But that resolution did not contain any condemnation of measures. There was nothing in it that would preclude the right hon. Baronet, whenever the interests of his country and his party might coincide, from reducing the duty on slave-grown sugar, or from bringing his own views upon the corn-laws, in conformity with those expressed by Sir George Murray, or the right hon. George Dawson. The right hon. Baronet—he would not say with disingenuousness, for he disliked the use of such phrases, but with characteristic caution, had taken especial care not to encumber the mo-

tion with engagements from which he might find it hereafter embarrassing to escape. He thought, however, that that advantage was countervailed by other considerations, and that the right hon. Baronet would find the calculation erroneous upon which he had founded his resolution. The resolution itself, of necessity, involved a comparison between the relative merits of the two great parties, and whosoever gave their vote in its favour, would in effect say, that not only the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, but also the hon. Baronet, the Member for Kent, and, still more strangely, the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke, were more deserving of the confidence of a reformed House of Commons, than the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, and the rest of those by whom reform was never abandoned. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth observed, that the defeats of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, were rendered the more signal by the field upon which they were sustained. The House of Commons, said the right hon. Gentleman, was their own House of Commons—it was constructed upon the principles of that celebrated bill, the introduction of which was confided to the noble Lord in 1831. That remark of the right hon. Gentleman was just, and the satire was also double-edged, because it recalled to the remembrance of all the part played by the noble Secretary for the Colonies—a part which had reflected new lustre upon the name of Russell—it reminded all of the incalculable services performed to his country by that noble Lord; and those Gentlemen upon the other side called upon the House to pronounce a sentence of condemnation upon the man to whom, upon their own admission, the existence of the House of Commons, in its reformed shape, was owing. It was on that party which had governed this country for ten years, with the exception of ten months, to which he should presently allude, that the House was invited to pronounce its verdict of distrust; at the same time the right hon. Baronet invited the House of Commons to place his policy and that of the Whigs into the balance. Look back from 1841 to the 1st of March, 1831, the year the Reform Bill was introduced into that House, amidst those manifestations of ridicule, to which they were, perhaps, too

by their support? The right hon. Baronet stated that the Post-office measure belonged exclusively to the Whigs. The right hon. Baronet was mistaken. The Post-office measure did not belong exclusively to the Whigs. It was supported by a large portion of the Tories in that House; it was applauded by Lord Ashburton, with whom the right hon. Baronet ought, perhaps, to have some fellow-feeling; and it passed the House of Lords—the great Conservative body of the kingdom, as it was called—without a division. If that measure were so fraught with evil as it had since been described to be, was it not the duty of the Tory party to arrest it in the House of Lords. [*“Cheers.”*] He confessed he was at a loss to discover the cause of the intimation conveyed to him by that cheer. At all events, it could not be disputed that the Post-office measure was supported in that House by a large portion of those Gentlemen who belonged to the party commonly designated Conservatives. But was that measure—was that great commercial boon—to be withheld lest certain monopolists should be in danger by means of modifications by which the revenue of the country, it was admitted, might be improved? True it was that the expenditure of the country had of late exceeded the revenue; but, mark, that excess had arisen from an outlay for sustaining the honour and interest of the country, and he could not refrain from expressing his surprise that with reference to this part of the question the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke (Sir J. Graham), who was first Lord of the Admiralty under a Whig Government, had not availed himself of the opportunity of referring to the present state of the department with which he was long and honourably associated. The right hon. Baronet scarcely adverted to our external policy. He thought that the right hon. Baronet would have said something of the Indian campaign, with respect to which he had given a notice, but which he dropped as soon as he heard of the victorious progress of the British arms in the East. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet felt that the intended Governor-General of India should not be embarrassed by any rash observations that might be made by the right hon. Baronet by whom the borough of Pembroke was at present represented. Upon the China question the right hon. Baronet certainly

uttered one or two sentences—sentences that he (Mr. Shiel) did not think would have been spoken, if the right hon. Baronet had been apprised of the fact that the flag of England was floating on the walls of Canton. He thought that the right hon. Baronet would find that as his notice upon a former occasion was dropped in consequence of the results of the Indian campaign, so the results in China would provide the best refutation to the premature censure and sarcasm cast upon that part of the policy of the Whig Ministry. But if the right hon. Baronet and his friends approved of the policy of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the East, and especially in Syria, how did it come to pass that they now passed it by almost in total silence. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke had hardly said a word with respect to it. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth merely glanced at it. Yet that part of the policy of the Government was of the utmost importance, almost of paramount importance. He would endeavour to make some compensation for the silence of the hon. Gentleman opposite by quoting the opinions of a man hostile to England, but whose sense of justice did not prevent his offering the high tribute of his approval of wisdom and genius. He held in his hand an extract from a speech made by one of the most eloquent men in the French Chamber of Deputies, M. Berryer, who, speaking of Lord Palmerston, said—

“Lord Palmerston has achieved great things for England in a short time. The Mediterranean is now again the central point in all the great transactions of the world. Lord Palmerston has planted his standard there; he has done a mighty deed, and I am not surprised that the most ardent English Tory is now resolved to do him honour and give him a firm sustinment.”

He supposed that M. Berryer was here adverting to the conduct of the Duke of Wellington, for that great soldier was too English, when the honour of his country was concerned, to degenerate into the partisan. But how must the man who spoke these words, or he should rather say—how must every man in Europe be astonished, if, after these achievements in the foreign policy of the country, the House of Commons should call upon the Queen to dismiss from her councils a man whom the House might deprive of office, but could not deprive of fame, and in his



place to transfer the foreign interests of the country to the party who in 1829 deserted Turkey—who permitted Russia to cross the Balkan, and allowed the trembling Sultan, who invoked their aid in vain, to attach his signature to the treaty of Adrianople, from which such evil consequences had since ensued. He would now pass, and pass rapidly, from the foreign policy of the country to the Home Department, and he did so because he saw on the opposite benches, the hon. Baronet the Member for Wiltshire (Sir F. Burdett), and he was anxious to congratulate that hon. Baronet upon the fact that—without the Six Acts—without the use of Olivers and Edwardses—without the aid of an excited yeomanry charging upon masses of defenceless men, the tranquillity of the country had been preserved. With the Home Department was in some measure connected the Poor-law question. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Wiltshire (Sir James Graham) stated that he condemned the severity of some of the clauses of the Poor-law bill; but in the progress of the measure through the House he did not recollect that in the cause of humanity the right hon. Baronet had ever interposed. His tardy and convenient commiseration must have been listened to with some disrelish by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Nottingham (Mr. Walter) the instrument through whom a remarkable petition had that night been presented to the House, and a Gentleman whom he respected, because in the cause of the poor he had lately made a very considerable sacrifice—a sacrifice he believed the hon. Gentleman would soon have the opportunity of repeating. He was further disposed to entertain a respect for that hon. Gentleman, because many years ago, when he made a motion on the Irish Church, he had the honour of receiving the hon. Gentleman's support, and in the small minority in which he (Mr. Sheil) was left upon that occasion, the name of Walter was conspicuous. Much had been said about the appropriation clause by the Gentlemen opposite—much had been said in condemnation of it; but if he recollected rightly, they themselves concurred not long ago in passing an appropriation clause with a vengeance: they agreed to the Canada Clergy Revenues Bill, their bishops, their clergy, all their usual supporters, with the single exception of the hon. Baronet, the Member for the

University of Oxford (Sir R. Inglis) agreed to that bill; a bill by which they conceded that property received by Act of Parliament for purposes exclusively ecclesiastical, should be diverted from its legal and recognised channel, and applied to Popish purposes. This, he thought, showed pretty plainly, that the party opposite were not influenced by those exclusively religious and Protestant sentiments that was generally supposed. He would now pass from the consideration of some of the measures adopted by the Whigs to the policy of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth, who, by his resolution, asked the House of Commons for a transfer of its confidence to him. The right hon. Baronet, in the course of his speech the other evening, adverted to the introduction of the Reform Bill into that House. Now, what was the conduct of the right hon. Baronet upon the Reform Bill? He would glance at it only for a moment. Two years previous to the introduction of that bill, the right hon. Baronet had refused to give representatives to the great towns and populous districts to the effect that time, had no voice in Parliament; and when the Reform Bill was brought forward, the right hon. Baronet—although he ought to have taken cognizance of the public opinion, and placed the noble resistance to the North Lancaireshire that state of things which the hon. Baronet Lord, the Member for North Lancaireshire (Lord Stanley) and the right hon. Sir James the Member for Pembroke (Sir James Graham), under the painful necessity of recommending the coercion of one of the Legislature. He came to the course pursued by the right hon. Sir R. Peel) in 1835. Under the circumstances did the right hon. Baronet come into office in that year? He would stand, that he did not intend to impute to him an attempt to revive, at that period the 'No Popery' cry. Strong language had been used in the course of the bill, he hoped, that none that came from (Mr. Sheil) would be considered strong. With all courtesy, therefore, in the spirit of frank dealing, he must say to the right hon. Baronet that his case was this: the right hon. Baronet was brought into office in 1835 by illegitimate means, and he found in the appendix to the report of the Orange lodge committee, a statement of the circumstances in which the

country was then placed, which superseded the necessity of his entering into any lengthened description of them. On the 12th November, 1834, the grand lodge of Ireland passed the following resolution—a resolution to which he begged particularly to direct the attention of the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire (Lord Stanley), as it contained a distinct reference to him. It was in these terms:—

“The Grand Lodge congratulated their brethren in various parts of Ireland on the state of public feeling as manifested at many meetings which had taken place in support of the Protestant constitution, and which had been most numerously attended; they also expressed an ardent hope, that their brethren in other parts of the kingdom would speak out and vindicate themselves, proving, that they were not what they had been described—the expiring remnant of a faction.”

There was no doubt, that the King was at that time made to believe, that what was commonly called the Protestant spirit in the country was thoroughly aroused. The King, availing himself of the death of Earl Spencer, dismissed his Ministers, and called the right hon. Baronet to his councils. That the country was at that time in a state of religious excitement there could be no doubt. What did the right hon. Baronet do? Parliament had sat for two years. The right hon. Baronet did not meet that Parliament. The right hon. Baronet shrunk from encountering that Parliament, and the right hon. Baronet dissolved it in the midst of the excitement to which he had alluded. What was the next step taken by the right hon. Baronet—what measures did he adopt? The right hon. Baronet attached great importance to the royal household; and the Earl of Roden, the Grand Master of the Orangemen of Ireland, was the nobleman whom the right hon. Baronet selected to place in the closest relation to his Sovereign. The House would remember the answers that were made by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Goulburn), then Secretary of State for the Home Department, to the addresses presented from the various Orange lodges. The House would remember the scenes that took place in the Dublin theatre. Those scenes must be fresh in the recollection of every Member of the House, and he confessed he did not think they formed any just ground for making the right hon. Baronet

(Sir R. Peel) the depository of the confidence of the House of Commons. What had been the conduct of the right hon. Baronet since he had been out of office. It was quite true, as stated by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke (Sir James Graham), that the right hon. Baronet had voted in favour of the English Municipal Bill; but what course did the right hon. Baronet pursue with respect to the Irish Municipal bill? He stated, that Ireland was placed under such peculiar circumstances, that it was not entitled to a community of privileges with England. England at last forced him to give way upon the subject; but when he did so, he still adhered to an odious distinction, which established for a poor country a franchise twice as large as that established in a country which was regarded as the richest in Europe. “For these reasons,” continued the right hon. and learned Gentlemen, “I think that the House of Commons ought to come to the conclusion that the party which is most deserving of its confidence, is that party by which municipal reform was carried—by which Parliamentary reform was carried—by which slavery was abolished—by which the East India trade was thrown open—by which the commerce of the country has been unshackled—by which a cheap medium of transit for intellectual and commercial communications has been afforded—by which the course of education has been promoted—by which Ireland has been conciliated—by which the union of the Canadas has been cemented and the foundation of a great empire laid in the west—and by which not only a great accession has been made to the glory and renown of England, but by which the peace of the world has been secured.”

Sir S. Canning said, that he was anxious to follow the example of courtesy prescribed by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, although he must take leave to say, that he thought that the right hon. Gentleman was in general singularly infelicitous in the character he gave to any debate in which he took part. He would not say that the right hon. Gentleman intended any want of courtesy on those occasions, but he meant to say, that he frequently indulged in personal observations of a painful character without in the least advancing his argument or the cause he was advocating. He could infer from the argument of the right hon.

Gentleman, that he looked upon the Reform Bill as the most transcendent measure of the Government with which he was connected; and he thanked Heaven that their misgovernment had led to no greater misfortune to the country. The event that was to send the Members of that House again before their constituents was now for the first time expressly avowed; and why? the truth no longer lay at the bottom of the well. The hon. Gentlemen opposite began to feel that they could make out no case against the arguments of his side of the House. They knew that there was but one constitutional and proper course for them to pursue, and to avoid that they determined to adopt the other alternative of a dissolution, as they now explicitly avowed. Now this announcement had not been met on his side of the House with any outcry—and why? because the Members on that side felt a confidence in their cause and argument, and that their strength lay in the people. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke last had alluded to many of the acts of the present Government, and, amongst others, to their policy as regarded foreign countries. He did not, by any means, wish to detract from the talents or merits of the noble Lord who conducted the foreign affairs of this country at present, or to speak disparagingly of any of the events of the last six months. He was aware of the difficulty of the noble Lord's duties and situation, for which he made every allowance, and he rejoiced in the success of her Majesty's arms; but at the same time that while he felt sure the noble Lord had done his best for the good of the country and the security of the peace of Europe, he must caution the House not to suffer themselves to be dazzled by temporary successes, but look dispassionately to the results. Suffice for him to say, that he believed if the noble Lord adopted a more European instead of an entirely English policy, the object of his exertions would have been more complete. Look at the excited state of France at this moment, and the vast armaments she had on foot, which produced, also, extraordinary armaments on the part of the other European powers, which he was apprehensive would lay the seeds of future disturbances. He could not, therefore, look back to the foreign policy of the country with that triumph which the right hon. Gentleman appeared to enjoy. With re-

spect to China, was it not now notorious, that after it had been announced, that every thing was settled with that country, the negotiations had been turned into a renewal of the war. The insurrection in Canada had broken out under the rule of the present Government, and if they looked to the domestic Government of the country at home, it could not be forgotten from what source the Chartists had first taken their rise, and the extent of mischief to which they were allowed to proceed until the peace of the country was put to hazard, and was only preserved by the gallantry of a small body of soldiers at Newport. The right hon. Gentleman asked if it was not madness to call for a change of Government when the country was in such a state of prosperity as he described. But this was not exactly the question before the House. The real question was as expressed in the resolution of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, namely, the incapacity of the Government to carry any measures they deemed necessary for the interests of the country, and that under such circumstances they ought to retire from office. If his side of the House had acquiesced in the proposition of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or in the Poor-law Amendment Act, without any attention to what was due to the constitution, they would, he doubted not, have reason hereafter to repent such a course. He would avoid saying anything on the subject of Ireland, as there were so many hon. Gentlemen present who understood the situation and interest of that country better than he did; but if the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for Dublin, had been in his place, he should have been tempted to make some observations on the tone of that hon. and learned Gentleman's speeches in that House, but as he was absent it would be more correct to abstain. He must, however, say, that in the cuckoo note of justice to Ireland, the hon. and learned Gentleman ought not to forget justice to England, and justice to the whole empire. And when the hon. and learned Gentleman was agitating for a repeal of the Union and a separation of the two countries, he could not but ask how it happened that the hon. and learned Gentleman had so close a connection with her Majesty's Government? He could not reconcile this any more than he could reconcile the votes of the Member for

Lincolnshire who, after declaring against the Government a few nights ago, now turned round to give them his support. He thanked the House for the attention with which they had heard him, as he was but little accustomed to join in their debates, and should close his observations by declaring his cordial acquiescence in the resolution before the House.

Mr. C. Buller said, the object of the right hon. Baronet in the very peculiar framing of the resolution which they were now discussing, evidently had been to get a vote of want of confidence in the present Ministry, without subjecting himself to any of the usual inconveniences and responsibilities of such a vote. The right hon. Baronet thought that he might avoid bringing under discussion the general policy of Ministers, by assuming the fact that it had frequently been repudiated by the House, and that he might thus avoid what, above all things, he shrank from, having to state the policy which he would substitute for their policy, and compelling the House, having both before it, to say which it prefers. But whether the right hon. Baronet carried his resolution or not, they might be very sure that the right hon. Baronet would not carry it in the way he desires. No man in this House would be foolish enough to vote on it without reference to its practical results; or be led away by the assertion of past exhibitions of want of confidence contained in the first, or by the abstract inference contained in the second part of the resolution, to vote for turning out the Ministry if he really approves of its policy. Those only can vote for it who, preferring a Tory policy, think that the majority of this House is Tory, and believe that it is prepared to support a Tory Ministry; and unless the object of those who support the motion were really that we should have no Government at all, it could only succeed if the majority were united, not only in condemning the policy of the present Ministers, but also in approving of the men and the policy which would prevail on their removal. He could not but think that the right hon. Baronet, in order to effect his purpose, had attempted to establish constitutional doctrines at once new and mischievous. He quite agreed with the right hon. Baronet, in deprecating the maintenance of a Ministry by the favour of the Crown, in opposition to the expressed will of a majority of the House

of Commons; and in holding it to be the duty of a Ministry enjoying the confidence of the Crown to guard its prerogative by yielding to the first intimation of the withdrawal of such confidence, and thus to obviate what the right hon. Baronet had described as "the necessity of recurring to the use of extreme instruments in the collision of antagonist powers." But if the Ministry were of opinion that the majority of the House, though hostile to one, or even more, of their measures, on the whole prefer them to any others—if they were slow in perceiving the indication of their own weakness, or in taking intimations of the alleged hostility of the House, there was no help for it except by the House specifying in terms which could not be mis-understood. Nothing, he felt sure, could be more dangerous—nothing more fatal to the prerogatives of the monarchy—nothing more inconsistent with the spirit of our constitution—nothing more destructive of the whole system of the "unfelt interposition of slight checks," so justly eulogized by the right hon. Baronet, than any attempt to define the contingencies in which the rejection of its measures ought to be regarded by a Ministry, as a proof of the withdrawal of the confidence of this House. And the more he considered the historical facts adduced by the right hon. Baronet, the more futile appeared his attempt to get any such definition from the precedents of our history. He had made out to his perfect satisfaction that nothing like a general rule could be deduced from the instances the right hon. Baronet had mentioned, but that the course taken by different Ministries in those cases has always depended on the peculiar circumstances of the case. Walpole resigned on a trivial question; because that trivial defeat showed him distinctly that, in spite of all the arts he had not scrupled to use, the opposition remained compact, and that he had lost his majority; and to Walpole the loss of a certain majority was—in the heated temper of men's minds, and the circumstances of the times—a matter that perilled his life, or at any rate his fortune and liberty, and rendered it incumbent on him when all hope of retaining power was gone, to secure his personal impunity by a prompt submission. Lord North retired with an actual majority of nine or ten, because no man in his senses would have dreamed of carrying on, with a bare ma-

jority, a disastrous and disgraceful war against the general and indignant sense of the country. Mr. Addington also retired with a majority in his favour, because he shrunk from the rashness of attempting to carry on the most gigantic war in which this country was ever engaged, in the face of Pitt, Fox, and Wyndham, opposing his war policy. There were circumstances in which Ministers required to be supported by the assurance that there existed a feeling in their favour, which they might count on in their most arduous and unforeseen vicissitudes; and they could not encounter these vicissitudes when even under the most favourable circumstances they were sure of being opposed by an almost overpowering force. But now, look to the defeats, which, in less trying national exigencies, or under circumstances that left them hopes of retrieving their general majority, have been experienced by Ministers without affecting their stability. Mr. Pitt, in 1784, and the right hon. Baronet, in 1835, carried on an obstinate struggle against majorities, in the hope that time would give them the means of breaking up the hostile majority. Mr. Pitt was gratified by success, and the right hon. Baronet by his chance of it. Lord North did not resign when Dunning carried his famous resolution against the influence of the Crown. Mr. Pitt did not resign when, in his first Ministry, he lost his French commercial treaty and his Irish propositions. In his second Ministry, his most attached personal friend, and most distinguished political adherent was impeached by a vote of this House, which left him in a minority. This blow is said, to have contributed to his death, but it did not bring about his resignation. He would not recount how Lord Liverpool's ministry ushered into existence with a distinct vote of want of confidence, lost the Property Tax one year, and the Salt Tax another, and how different items of its estimates were torn from it in succession; because he wished to direct the attention of the House to one important measure, of which it experienced the defeat, and to which little, if any, allusion had been made in the course of these debates—he supposed, because, though its failure was caused by the certainty of defeat in this House, it was never exposed to an actual vote here. If ever there was a question, to the success of which the personal honour, as well as the

political existence of a ministry were linked—in which the feelings of the Sovereign and the honour of the Crown were deeply involved—and which, in its universal and strong influence on the national mind, transcended every question that had been agitated within his personal recollection—or, at any rate, any question except Reform, it was the Bill of Pains and Penalties against Queen Caroline. Yet, after abandoning that measure in deference to the strong minority in the House of Lords, the presumed majority in this House, and the general sense of the country, Lord Liverpool's Government went on; and it was clear, that his so doing, must have been in perfect accordance with the spirit of the Constitution, because within little more than a year, that Government was strengthened by the accession of no less constitutional authorities than the right hon. Member for Montgomeryshire and his Friends. And why did such defeats as those he had enumerated produce no effect on the Ministers of the day, in spite of the importance of the questions in which they were placed in minorities? Because the House, while differing from them even on questions of such magnitude, nevertheless generally sanctioned their measures; because, condemning their course even on such points, it nevertheless preferred them to any who could have taken their places. He thought, indeed, that it might fairly be inferred, as well from the precedents of our history as from the common sense of the thing, that whenever Ministers have resigned, it has not been on account of any particular defects, but because from the general temper of the House, as well as of the country, it was quite clear, that the powers of the executive government could no longer be effectually wielded by the party in office. The right hon. Baronet told them, that the Duke of Wellington's ministry resigned because it was beaten on the Civil-list. That defeat was undoubtedly the occasion, but it surely was not an adequate cause for such a result; it was hardly possible to conceive any question on which a strong ministry might with a better grace have yielded to the opinion of the House, and continued in office. But the Duke of Wellington went out on that defeat because he was not strong; because never, in the history of the country was there a ministry in whose weak hands power was so thoroughly pa-

ralysed—never a ministry more unpopular at home, or less respected abroad. The Duke of Wellington went out, because, at the previous general election, the great mass of the really independent constituencies of the country had declared against him, and his strength, such as it was, consisted almost entirely of the Members for the close boroughs. He went out, because he could neither keep the peace, nor protect the property of the country, not against rebels and insurgents, but against machine-breakers and rick-burners, and because being as powerless with regard to the City pickpockets as to the rural rioters, he was obliged to proclaim to the world, that the King of England could not go to dine at the Mansion-house, because his Ministers dared not, for fear of their lives, pass through Fleet-street at night. He went out when beaten on the Civil-list, because he wished to avoid being beaten on the question of Reform. His Government, in fact, had testified its inefficiency to discharge even the most ordinary duties of government, and it was afraid that after all its past disgraces, worse disaster was impending over it. Now what one of these grounds for resignation was, it even pretended exists in the case of the present Government? It was not the Ministry that shrank from any impending discussion, and it need not go out of office in order to evade any question which was to be brought on. Had any single instance been adduced of the laws not being efficiently administered owing to the weakness of the Government since they had been in office? The present Government had unhappily had to deal with disorders as formidable as any of its predecessors, and it might on this score invite a contrast with any preceding Government, and point with pride to the energy and success with which the law had always been enforced by it. There had been Chartist outbreaks, having their origin in a more extensive and deeply-seated desire of political change, and in a more formidable organization than ever before existed. Was it possible to imagine, that they could have been suppressed with greater ease and promptitude, with more hearty good will on the part of the public? They had had now no rural disorders, and Ireland, instead of being a scene of bloodshed and confusion, presented comparatively little crime, and

scarcely any semblance of resistance to the laws. If this state of things precluded the Government from any claim to merit, on the score of energetic repression, it entitled it to the far higher merit of having put an end to disorder, by removing the disposition to turbulence. Indeed, the weakness of the right hon. Baronet's case on this head was pretty apparent, when he was driven to such a trumpety reproach as that which he directed against the Government on account of its being so hard run the other night on the motion of his hon. Friend, the Member for Finsbury; as if there ever was a Government that was not liable to be run pretty hard, or even to be occasionally defeated on chance divisions between eight and nine o'clock. If the right hon. Baronet came into office and should continue to stay in it a whole Session, it was evident, that there are a great many things which he would have to learn, and among others he would, perhaps, find out how very Radical this House is between the hours of seven and nine. Whatever might be the right hon. Baronet's majority on great divisions, he would be bound, that the right hon. Baronet's Government would be weak enough every evening at that time; and if resignation was to be the consequence of such weakness, as the right hon. Baronet says it ought to be, he suspected the right hon. Baronet would have to resign the first month after he was in. Take again our foreign policy, the administration of which was, after all, the point above all others on which the mere strength and efficiency of a Government was of most importance without reference to the wisdom of its policy. Whatever might be men's individual opinions of the foreign policy of the Government, they must all wish, that whatever it might be, it should be administered with such vigour as to make the power of England respectable in the eyes of the world. He did not believe there ever was a period in which the power of England was more respected throughout the world than it was at this present moment. He himself happened to differ from the Government on the Eastern policy. He thought, that they should have aimed at different results from those which they have obtained. But he was bound to say, that the noble Lord's policy was much more in accordance with public opinion than that which he himself would have followed, and, differing from the po-

licy, he was the more compelled to admire the extraordinary vigour which had secured its success, the accurate knowledge on which it was founded—the skill with which the necessary preparations were made, and the courage with which imagined impossibilities and real risks of failure were encountered by the noble Lord. Though he still wished that the energy displayed had been directed to other objects, he could not but feel proud of the effect which the display of it had had in elevating the name and influence of England among other nations. He could not but contrast their present proud position with the miserable figure that this country cut during the Duke of Wellington's Ministry, twelve years ago, when every European power presumed on our internal dissensions, and when, in defiance of every principle of foreign policy professed by the then Ministers both before and since, we allowed Russia and France to dismember the Turkish empire, with just enough of remonstrance on our part to mark the impotence of our disapproval. The right hon. Baronet had been able to make out so very little of a case of weakness against the Government on the score of its administrative acts, that he has wisely confined the burthen of his charge to its legislative failures. Its positive defeats he had been pleased to magnify into a matter of very notorious frequency; but it did not appear, in spite of the numerous divisions on which the Government was said to have been beaten, that any very great number of its measures had been thwarted. The numerous recent defeats with which they were taunted all amounted to the loss of the Ministerial bill for the Irish Registration—a matter of no great practical importance in his eyes, since the result of the whole contest was, that no change has been made in the law on the subject, and the attempt to disfranchise the people of Ireland, under the pretence of a new system of registration, had been defeated. He spoke, of course, of events that occurred previous to the development of the new and great commercial policy of the Government. That, he confessed, had been obstructed most effectually and most injuriously to the best interests of the country, and the Government would indeed have been most weak, and deserved the contempt its opponents had cast upon it, had it resolved to abandon such a scheme without giving the country a

chance of declaring itself in its favour. But some of the reproaches directed against the Government on the score of its legislative measures surprised him coming from the right hon. Baronet. He had been astounded at hearing the right hon. Baronet make it matter of reproach that some of its measures had been framed with a view of conciliating the opposition—that they had been carried by means of partial compromise—and that their success had very often depended on the support they received from the other side of the House. These were strange reproaches from a Conservative politician, who should have looked on the state of things described as one which in ordinary times was by no means undesirable. A Ministry which did not belong to either extreme must of necessity occasionally depend for support on different parties. He could not think it undesirable that a Government should be obliged so to depend—that it should be unable to ride rough-shod over its opponents by the mere force of a tyrant majority—and that, in carrying through measures of great and extensive change, it should be forced to make some compromises with existing interests, and conciliate to a certain extent the feelings of its opponents. The rotten boroughs used sometimes to give a Ministry a majority independent of popular feeling, and ready to maintain its policy through thick and thin; but in a popularly-chosen House of Commons you must have either such a state of things as the present, or any great excitement and legislation must be carried on by means either of compromise or agitation. He thought agitation a very necessary thing sometimes, but he was content sometimes to have intervals of repose, and periods of political repose were in his view necessarily periods of compromise. The right hon. Baronet, who above all things deprecated agitation and excitement, was particularly inconsistent, therefore, in objecting to compromise and conciliation; but he was still more astonished at such an objection coming from the right hon. Baronet, because, if he were called on to describe the principles that had guided that right hon. Baronet through his political life, he should say it was the principle of concession and compromise; and that his system while Minister had always been that of carrying into effect the political views of his opponents by means of their co-operation. The

right hon. Baronet seemed singularly forgetful of his past ministerial career; and on the whole it would not be a very gratifying subject of retrospect. But he ought, when he was pouring forth the splendid bile of his indignation on Ministerial weakness and concession, to recollect his own Administration of 1835, when his justification of every measure proposed by him was, that it was precisely similar to some proposal of Lord Althorp; and when his only majority—that on the malt tax—was secured by our co-operation. But the right hon. Baronet and his Friends always claimed for that particular Administration an exemption from all the ordinary rules of political propriety, and spoke of it as a great experiment, in the course of which, on some ground which had never yet been fully explained, he had a right to do what it would be very wrong for others to do. So be it: but did the right hon. Baronet pursue a different course in the Duke of Wellington's Administration, of which he was the head in that House? That Administration held power during three Sessions of Parliament. What was the great legislative measure of the first Session—that of 1828? The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts—carried against him in the first instance by a majority, then taken up by him, and carried through both Houses. What was the great measure of 1829? Catholic Emancipation, adopted by him after having his whole life opposed to it, and carried against his Friends by the aid of the opposition. Nor did the right hon. Baronet and his colleagues hold up their heads more proudly in the Session of 1830. The very first night of that Session an amendment on the Address was moved by the right hon. Baronet's right hon. Friend, the Member for Kent, and the Government was saved from defeat solely by the aid of stanch Members of the Whig opposition, who voted with him by the advice of the leaders of their own party. That Session was a very important one in respect of its financial policy: and by far the most important division of the Session was that which took place on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's proposal with respect to the beer tax, of which he thought the repeal best for the great body of the people. But the landed Gentlemen thought it would be a better thing for themselves to repeal the malt tax, and so they opposed the repeal of the beer tax. On that occa-

sion the Government again had to depend on the support of their political opponents: and thus the one measure of the Session of 1830, which gave the Government any claim to popular gratitude, was carried by means of the support they received from the other side of the House. The right hon. Baronet, before he taunted his successors, should sometimes cast back a thought on his own ministerial career; and not judge so uncharitably of those who now carried on their Government in that spirit of compromise, and of reliance on the occasional honesty of the opposite party, on which he himself used habitually to lean. He did not remind the House of these things in order merely to annoy the right hon. Baronet by taunts, or to parry his arguments by retorts. He admitted the weakness of the Government in this House: and he could not but deplore the mischief which such weakness undoubtedly occasioned. It was not merely that, being weak, the Government could not carry those liberal measures which he heartily desired to see carried; but it must be admitted that this weakness prevented the progress of many beneficial measures which would interfere with the views and interests of no party. Without speaking of measures which from this cause have been brought before Parliament, they must all lament the loss of such a measure as the County Courts Bill; they must all deplore the risk which they run of a second year losing the bill for creating two new judges in Equity; above all, they must lament the loss of the Poor-law Amendment Bill, which the noble Lord was perfectly right in withdrawing rather than subject it to an unprincipled bidding for popularity on the eve of a general election; but which, though it thus got another chance, got one which, after that election, would, he feared, be very small. He regretted this weakness as much as any man could; but it seemed to him a necessary consequence of the present state of parties in the country, and he saw no chance of getting a better and stronger Government at present. He could not admit, indeed, that a strong Government was all that they had to desire. He would undoubtedly rather have a Government like the present, unable to carry good measures, than one which should be willing and able to carry bad ones. But taking the question even on the ground on which the right hon. Baronet had placed it, he must still,



before he consented to remove the present Government, make sure of getting a better in its place. If he withdrew his confidence from it on the ground of its not being strong, he must at any rate know where a stronger Government was to come from. He did not think the right hon. Baronet would supply the country with a strong Government. It was with a view to this, that he had reverted to his past career as a Minister. The weakness which marked it was no result of temporary causes or accidental errors. It was the necessary result of his very principles of action—of his whole political system. Place him in power again, and he could do nothing but repeat the errors he committed of old; and, after a ministerial career, liable to every reproach which he had urged against the present Government, bring it to a close as calamitous to himself and the country as that of his former Administration. He indeed wished, considering the chances which they had of seeing the right hon. Baronet at the head of affairs, that he could find in his present course aught that could inspire him with confidence in his administering the Government in a spirit worthy of his concession of Catholic emancipation. Looking on that as the great act of the right hon. Baronet's life, he wished he could say that his subsequent career had proved worthy of it—had shown that he rightly appreciated the wisdom and virtue of the act—and he had thus elevated it into an example of political integrity, instead of lowering it into that mere petty shift of temporary expediency, which it now appeared to be. Had the right hon. Baronet made that act the foundation of a new political career, renewed the principles upon which he previously acted, and adapted them to that course of events which he had already found irresistible, he would now have occupied the proudest and safest station ever held by public man. But since that period, the right hon. Baronet's life had been a servile repetition of his former errors. Again he had banded himself with those from whom he was compelled to separate himself once. Again he had enlisted himself in that course of resistance to the popular will which he was compelled to abandon once. Again he had, in opposition, linked himself to principles impracticable in power; and, as on a former occasion, he was borne into office by a No-Popery mob, he was now brought back to its gates as the champion

of intolerance and monopoly. This was a cause in which no man could succeed—and no majorities which his adherents could imagine for him would enable him to struggle against the national feelings and interests that he was arraying against himself. The stars in their course fought against him in his warfare with the irresistible courses of human events, and the irrepressible feelings of men. The right hon. Baronet was not unaware of the hopelessness of the contest. When power was last within his reach, the right hon. Baronet confessed that he shrunk from grasping it on account of the difficulties that encumbered it. Ireland, he then said, was his great difficulty. All that he had done since had been to augment the difficulty of governing Ireland—and if he could not now with truth repeat the same confession, it was only because he had of late contrived to make England a greater source of difficulties than Ireland itself. In one respect he (Mr. C. Buller) perceived, in the course of the right hon. Baronet, a change that seemed to have been wrought by the recollection of the course which he was compelled to take with respect to the Catholic question. His experience on that matter seemed to have suggested to him the inconvenience of pledging himself to particular measures, and his aim of late appeared to have been to avail himself of a party without binding himself to its policy. On every question on which he had had to vote, his great object appeared to have been to leave himself at liberty to vote the reverse hereafter. And, like the feudal Baron of old, while appearing to strengthen his defences against the foe, his chief ingenuity had been expended in providing postern gates, and subterranean passages, to facilitate the abandonment of his stronghold. He knew of no question which the right hon. Baronet had not made a matter of unspecified time, and unparticularised details. He boasted to the House the other night of his eminent explicitness on every subject of public interest; and his explicitness exhausted itself so completely on the charter, that he told them nothing of his policy as to any question about which anybody expected that he would have to give a practical vote during the next ten years. He would tell the right hon. Baronet what effect his explicit declarations had produced on public expectation. The right hon. Baronet had been so explicit

on the subject of sugar, that he had left it perfectly open to himself to make the trade in sugar more free than the present Government proposed to do after a lapse of a year or two, or on the slightest diminution of supply from our present sources. He had put the question of the timber duties on the unknown contents of a letter from the present Governor-general of Canada, without a sight of which he alleged, that the human mind was incompetent to grapple with the principle of the question; and the policy which he might adopt in office, depended on the letters which his own future Governor-general might at the convenient moment write, in order to further whatever views he might hereafter wish to establish. The right hon. Baronet had been so explicit on the Corn-laws, that no man knew whether his hinted alteration of that sliding scale to which he had pledged himself with such vague devotedness, was to amount to a mere mockery of the suffering people of this country, or to a virtual fixed duty. As to his own remedies for the commercial difficulties of the people, or the pecuniary wants of the Exchequer, he had been explicitly reserved and uncommunicative. It was the sound and just maxim of Tory statesmen in former times, that no man was justified in thwarting the adoption of any plan proposed for the remedy of an acknowledged evil without proposing some better plan in its stead. True, with regard to all questions this was most true, and used to be most freely admitted with respect to taxes, and every tax being necessarily an evil, it had always been held that no man was justified in opposing any scheme for providing for the public wants except by suggesting a better. The right hon. Baronet would give them no information as to the course which he would take in office, and this great commercial country was left to make out from some dark hints thrown out by him whether he would make things square by adding to the public debt, or by reducing those establishments of which he and his friends urged the augmentation, or by a property tax, or by restoring the old rate of postage, or by any new form of indirect taxation, or by carrying, with the aid of his opponents, changes in the tariff similar to those with respect to which he now thwarted the present Government. It was impossible to deny that a party scheme so loose and wide had

surrounded the right hon. Baronet, with a large host of supporters, and that as he might be joined by any who, without fixed political principles, could pay their footing in that House, his minority had been swelled by the recent elections, which he, in a voice of bitter irony against popular institutions, had been pleased to treat as indications of public opinion, but which in sober sadness proved only the wealth of certain individuals, and the venality or dependence of certain constituencies. And by what bond was that large party held together? In what he was going to say, he meant no imputation on the personal or political integrity of the right hon. Baronet, whom he readily admitted to be an honest and public-spirited statesman, but whom he could not, as he would wish, call a great one. But it was the misfortune of his false position in politics that he was supported by half his present adherents, in the belief that the instant he had got into office he would throw over the other half. The right hon. Baronet should hear what his friends say of him out of doors. He did not mean those who had for some time been unable to conceal their hatred and suspicion of him, when necessity compelled them to use him as their only safeguard against the people. He spoke of moderate and sensible men, who, when you anticipate a career of violence and confusion from the Ultra-Toryism in England and Orangeism in Ireland, tell you—"Now, my dear fellow, just you wait till Peel's once in, and then you'll see how he'll throw all those fellows over." One man tells you—"Depend upon it Peel's a much better Reformer than the present men." Another assures you, "that he's the most thorough-going free-trader in England." And (continued the hon. and learned Gentleman) many a moderate Tory has promised me, that the first thing Peel will do when in office will be to pay the Catholic clergy in Ireland. Meantime, the gentlemen of every description, who are to be thrown over, see this, and endeavour to take advantage of the right hon. Baronet's present position, and coil around him such professions of bigotry and monopoly as they think it will be impossible for him to extricate himself from in office. I feel sure that they labour in vain: that when in office the right hon. Baronet will do what he thinks best for his country; and that in so doing he will do what half his

supporters will think the worst and wickedest things that man can do. But I have no wish to see the ultimate triumph of my principles secured by such means as these; and I will do nothing to aid the right hon. Baronet in gaining power which I know he would be unable to hold. To retard the progress of Liberal principles he will do nothing effectual, but he may do much to endanger the solidity of our constitution. We are already greatly indebted to the right hon. Baronet for many very important reforms. It was his administration that gave us Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary reform; but it did so by calling into being the Catholic Association, and the Birmingham Union, with Terry Alt, and Swing. Let our next step be obtained by less fearful agencies; and it is because I believe it will be effectually obtained, but obtained without danger to public order, by a Ministry which places itself in the front of popular feeling, and improved views of Government—which, sympathising with the wants and sentiments of the great masses of their countrymen, voluntarily effect those reforms which others yield only to the angry coercion of the masses, that I shall express by my vote of to-night, my hearty preference of the present Ministry to those who are struggling to place themselves in their position.

Viscount *Dungannon* said, the question the House had to determine was simply whether the course pursued by her Majesty's Ministers was constitutional and honest or not, and whether the precedent which they had laid down by their conduct would not be injurious to all future Governments. The hon. and learned Gentleman who spoke last had attempted to bolster up the case of Ministers by placing the former conduct of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, in an unfavourable light; but what parallel was there between the two cases? None whatever; and therefore, the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman so far was good for nothing. Now, he fully agreed, that on being defeated, the Ministers would be justified in appealing to the country; but he must say, that sustaining defeat after defeat, they were not justified in retaining office and deferring an appeal to the country for an indefinite period. Such a proceeding was not in conformity with either the practice or the spirit of the constitution; and he was

satisfied, that in the history of this country no precedent to warrant their conduct could be found. It might be said, that the whole budget of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had been rejected by a large majority of that House; and this was an occurrence which, he believed, had never before taken place. There could, then, be no doubt, that the Government did not possess the confidence of Parliament. But this was not the only subject upon which they had suffered defeat. What had become of their Irish Registration Bill? Was it not admitted that they could not carry that measure? And what was the gloss attempted to be put upon that defeat? Why, that the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, had also failed in carrying his bill. The bill introduced by the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, was avowedly a Government, an important Government measure; and yet Ministers were unable to carry it through that House. To what was their inability owing if it were not to the House of Commons having no confidence in them? They had, too, staked their existence as a Government on the appropriation clause, but had not that measure, like all their others, been abandoned by them? But they asserted, that they did not possess the confidence of the people. If this were so, why did they not at once test the point by a dissolution? It could not, however, be denied, that they had lost election after election—that whenever the battle had been fought on the hustings they had been signally defeated; and now, forsooth, they outraged common sense by saying, "If you object to our Budget, why do you not tell us what sort of Budget you, if in office, would produce?" It was quite impossible to understand what was their criterion as to the state of public opinion. With regard to the elections, they attributed their want of success to the wealth of the candidate opposed to them, and the venality of the constituencies; but could such an observation apply to the triumphs achieved at either St. Alban's or Sandwich? He would recommend those who lived in glass houses not to throw stones. Ministers might put off the evil day as long as they could, but they might depend upon it, that it would arrive at last, and that the storm would burst with a fearful crash over their heads; for far and wide the feeling of want of confidence was extending

Itself, in consequence of the unparalleled and unconstitutional course which they were pursuing. Their efforts, by means of hole-and-corner meetings in town and country, would not enable them to hold power which they so grievously abused much longer, and it was not creditable to them to keep places which they could only retain by ministering to the bad passions of excited mobs. They were now pursuing conduct which they themselves had denounced as injurious and insane; and the House, recollecting the sentiments expressed by the head of the Government some time back, in reference to the Corn-laws, must be at a loss to conjecture what it was that had caused such a total change in the opinions of her Majesty's Ministers. The fact, however, was, that they saw they could not carry on the Government except by means of agitation, and this it was, that had led to their bringing forward the three questions respecting sugar, timber, and corn. Now, in reference to the line of conduct adopted by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lincolnshire, and the hon. Gentleman who also represented a division of that county, all he could say was, that to him it was wholly unintelligible. The noble Lord and the hon. Gentleman had voted against Ministers on the sugar duties, and would, it was to be concluded, also oppose them on the Corn-laws; and yet, in the face of a past and prospective opposition to two important Government propositions, the noble Lord, and the hon. Gentleman, strange to say, were now prepared by their votes on the present occasion to assert that Ministers were deserving of the confidence of that House, and of the country. Such reasoning, he must confess, he could not understand; and he thought it was calculated to inflict an irreparable injury on the character of that House, by bringing its proceedings into discredit with the country. When disturbances occurred in the country, did they not find the right hon. Baronet ready to aid them in their measures for putting them down? And to whom, he would ask, might the occurrence of those disturbances be ascribed? To the Government who encouraged agitation when it suited their own views. The last hour of that Government was at length approaching, and he trusted, that their seats would be filled by those who, if not, in every sense of the word, powerful, would at least be honest and straightfor-

ward, and who would not resort to chicanery, the like of which, he hoped, would not be witnessed for many a long year, if ever again, by this country. He should, on this occasion, add another to the many votes which he had given against a Government whose policy had been fraught with danger to the best interests of the country.

*Sir Harry Verney*: The noble Lord who has just resumed his seat, has no right to throw on hon. Members the charge of supporting her Majesty's Government for party. I do not desire to accuse Gentlemen opposite of opposing them with any such unworthy view, and the fair construction that I am willing to place on their conduct, I claim most unreservedly for ours. I am astonished to hear the noble Lord reiterate the charge made by the right hon. Member for Pembroke, against the Member for Lincolnshire, for a more complete answer than that given by the hon. Member for Lincolnshire, has rarely, I believe, been given by one hon. Member to another in this House. And the answer contained a severe rebuke. The charge of inconsistency made by the right hon. Baronet, was fully met and disposed of by the hon. Member, by a reference to a speech at Carlisle, made by the right hon. Gentleman in 1835, when he stated, that it was not because he differed from the Government on one question, that he could be expected, or would be justified, in plunging into opposition to their measures in general. The noble Lord has referred to recent contests to prove that the Government has lost the confidence of the country. Single elections do not prove much one way or the other, but when the noble Lord refers to them, and at the same moment charges us with inconsistency, I must say, that unless public rumour does great injustice to the party opposite, one of the most important of the recent elections does no honour to the consistency of their political conduct. If the hon. Gentleman lately returned for Nottingham, was sent to that place by the Conservative party, that circumstance is calculated very essentially to excite distrust in that party, and must be viewed with pain by any man who watches political events, and values political integrity. A gentleman altogether unconnected with the place, and unknown there, is sent down by the party opposite, and contests the borough solely

on the ground of his hostility to the new Poor-law, supported though that law had been in its general and essential principles by all the most distinguished Members of the Conservative party. It has been affirmed, that he was not only sent down by the Conservative Club, but that his contest was supported by their funds. [Dissent from Sir E. Knatchbull and others.] I am glad to receive from the hon. Baronet this assurance, that the statement is not true. I should be sorry if it were. I should deeply lament any circumstance that would stain the character of a political party, whether opposed to me or not; and this would, I think, if it had been true, been highly discreditable to the party opposite. Sir, it cannot be denied, that the vote proposed by the right hon. Member for Tamworth, calls on those Members whose votes have contributed to retain her Majesty's Ministers in their offices, to consider the ground on which they have given their support to the Government—it calls particularly on the Members for agricultural districts, who have been informed in the course of the debate, that for the course they have pursued in the discussion, they will not be again returned to this House, and most especially those Members are called on to consider them who are not indifferent to the interesting duties and occupations afforded by a seat in this House, and who having no connection with any but an agricultural district, are thus threatened with exclusion from Parliament. I am happy to acknowledge the obligation under which I feel myself to my constituents, who have now for nearly ten years granted me their confidence, fettered by only one condition, that I should faithfully perform my duties here, and support whatever measures appear to me conducive to the good of the country. I have redeemed my pledge to the best of my ability, and it is for having done so that I find myself arraigned by the motion of the right hon. Baronet. In reviewing the conduct of her Majesty's Ministers, I do not look back on what leads me to regret the support that I have generally given them; still less am I disposed now to acquiesce in the vote of want of confidence in them. I have watched their conduct, and believe it to have been directed to the good of the country. As a country magistrate, I have long taken a warm interest in the trans-

actions of the business of the county in which I reside, and I bear my testimony to the advantage to the rural population of many measures of the Government. When first I began to act as a magistrate, I observed many things which appeared to me objectionable. I consulted an experienced Friend, the present Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, as to remedying them—the best remedy for such things, said he, is an open court. I followed his advice, and made many fruitless attempts to get the business of the county done in open court, but the subject was taken up by a Member of the Government, and obtaining their sanction, open court became the law of the land, and important advantages have, I think, resulted from that enactment. Then came the rural police, all of us who reside in country districts, know how inefficient the old constabulary force has become. A commission was appointed to consider this subject, and suggest a remedy; and the plan adopted by the Government under which those counties who approve it may adopt the rural constabulary force. I should have preferred, that the whole country should be placed under a general police force, organised and under one superintendence; but that plan received the strenuous opposition of hon. Gentlemen opposite. This subject affords an instance of the mode in which Ministers are attacked in this House and out of doors. If I were a candidate for the representation of the county in which I reside, a host of opponents would rise against me as a friend of the rural police, an unconstitutional, Anti-British, revolutionary plan of the Whigs to destroy the Saxon institutions of the country; and on the other side, the right hon. Member for Pembroke says, that for the rural police force the Ministers deserve no credit, as it is based on the measure of the right hon. Member for Tamworth, and is indeed only an extension of his plan. How can I sufficiently thank the Ministers for their persevering support of the principles of the new Poor-law?—that law which has done so much to improve the character of the agricultural population. I would not pledge myself to support every proposal contained in the act of this Session, but I cannot forget the obloquy thrown on the Government, and the clamour raised against them because they refuse to depart from the principles on which the act is framed;

and I hold, that the whole country, and especially the agricultural portion of it, are deeply indebted to them. Must I concur in a vote of censure on account of the changes introduced by the Government in our criminal code? The Ministers have swept from the statute book sanguinary laws, that had not the effect of preventing the crimes they punished. And this brings me to a subject that I believe never received from any former Minister the attention bestowed on it by the noble Lord. Long before I had a seat in this House, my mind was directed to the subject of prison discipline; and when visiting the prisons of the metropolis, and different parts of the country, the evils of our prison management struck me forcibly. How often have I been told by the governor or chaplain of a gaol, of some prisoner sent there for a trivial offence. He had never been in prison before, and such was the corrupted atmosphere of the gaol, that in three weeks his character was lost, and he was fit for nothing but to be sent out of the country. And, Sir, attempts have been made of late years to apply a remedy to this most grievous evil, and the subject has been discussed here, and from whom have proceeded lessons of the most practical wisdom on the subject? Who but the noble Lord below me showed that he had considered the whole question the most deeply, and had weighed the advantages and the evils of different systems of prison discipline? Yes, Sir, I listened with delight to those speeches on prison discipline and transportation, with feelings very different to any that mere political or party interests could call forth. To speeches delivered almost to empty benches—that certainly obtained no votes—that hardly elicited a cheer—but I walked away from this House with the conviction, that the lowest and most degraded of the population were thought of, and cared for, by one who stood highest in the council of our Sovereign; that the poor prisoner in his cell had a friend in the noble Lord—that means were taken, and the attempt was made to alleviate his condition, and prevent the punishment bringing a moral corruption over him, and that the author of these humane endeavours was the leader of this House. Will it be said, that the sacred interests of religion, and the advantage of the Church, have been neglected by the Government. Was the Tithe Com-

mutation Bill not a most valuable measure to them? Did it not promote their temporal advantage and spiritual usefulness? The better discipline of the clergy, the diminution of pluralities, were these not beneficial to the Church? Have the Ministers not generally made a good selection of bishops? I know, Sir, that the Church have for the most part, as the noble Lord who spoke last declared, been hostile to the Government, but it is my opinion, that the Government has proved itself most friendly to the Church. No other Administration can confer such benefit on the Church, and on the agricultural interest, as have been conferred on them both by the present, for no evils are left so great as those which have been remedied in great measure by the Commutation of Tithe and the Poor-law. Am I to look at Ireland, and for its condition unite in a vote of censure against the Whigs? There we see peace preserved, and property protected, to an extent not known by any person living. Have our colonial interests suffered under the Administration of the present Ministers? Emancipation has prospered in the West Indies beyond the most sanguine expectation of its supporters. Canada has been tranquillised, and there is every prospect that the union of the provinces will be a successful measure. In the East, success has attended our arms. No proposition is more evident, than that with regard to India, much latitude should be left to the judgment of the authorities on the spot. The Governor-general was selected by her Majesty's Government, and taken from their ranks. He considered it necessary to send an army to Afghanistan, and the expedition planned with wisdom, was conducted with energy. I have always hoped, that the circumstances of that empire might allow its rulers to devote their attention more to its internal concerns than to foreign wars; but I never doubted, that they were right in detecting and punishing any intrigues that might be entered into against our power, and in maintaining unimpaired the prestige of the prevailing might of this country, which gives us so much influence among the nations of the East. Is it for their foreign policy that I am to join in a vote of want of confidence in the Government? The right hon. Member for Lynn approved of the energy displayed by the Foreign Secretary during the last six months, but I contend,



that it is impossible to study the despatches illustrating the foreign policy of the last six years, without being struck by the ability and attention to the interests of this country with which they have been conducted. I regret, that the right hon. Gentleman, and the right hon. Member for Tamworth, should have expressed an opinion on so delicate a subject as our amicable relations with France, as if we had not done all in our power to maintain them, for it appears to me most evident from a careful perusal of the despatches, that the maintenance of a friendly understanding with that power, was a main feature in the noble Lord's foreign policy. In vain do I look through the foreign policy for occasions of censure on the Government, and for reasons why the conduct of our Foreign Affairs should be withdrawn from them. It is not so difficult to state reasons why it ought to remain in their hands at this juncture. The American boundary question is evidently near its settlement—who so likely to terminate that satisfactorily as the noble Lord, who has for so long a period conducted the negotiation? The American tariff will be new modelled in 1842. Will the right hon. Baronet opposite be as well qualified to negotiate favourably for this country as the noble Lord, who has shewn his desire to receive the produce of their country? The Brazilian treaty expires next year—and the Prussian commercial league settles anew its tariff. Is it not of the utmost importance, that negotiations with these Powers should be conducted by the Minister who has the most carefully followed them. Sir, I tremble for the commercial prosperity of this country, if its affairs are taken from the hands of the noble Lord at this period, and transferred to the management of hon. Gentlemen opposite—nor do I know any department which is likely to gain by the change—and in some I fear that we may be seriously losers. This is the time when the House and the country should speak out. Have the Queen's Ministers merited your confidence? Have the institutions of our happy country been strengthened or impaired under their Administration? Have we enjoyed a large measure of peace and prosperity at home, and honour and respect abroad? Answer these questions faithfully, and recollect, that on your vote may depend, under Providence, the continuation of all these blessings.

Colonel Sibthorp said, that as one connected with the county of Lincoln, he had heard with regret and surprise, the expressions and opinions, that had been made use of by the noble Lord, the Member for North Lincolnshire, and by the hon. Member who represented the southern division of that county. He had repeatedly heard those Gentlemen, whether at public meetings or on the hustings, or other places, where he had the honour of meeting them, holding out assurances and promises of attachment and support to the agricultural interest in that county, and who relied on them to defend their interest in that House. As a freeholder in that county he had a right to express his opinion with respect to the votes and speeches of those Gentlemen, and to express his feelings at the manner in which the noble Lord and the hon. Member had deceived their constituents and himself. He hoped the hon. Member, whom he saw in his place (Mr. Handley), had seen the county newspaper in which his conduct was commented on, and which expressed the dissatisfaction entertained in that county at his conduct. The opinions which that hon. Member had thought fit to express in that House, were not the feelings or opinions of the great agricultural constituency which he represented, and he hoped, that they never would be. There was an old adage, "Tell me your company, and I'll tell you who you are." *Noscitur a sociis*, and it was easy to know by the hon. Member's conduct, who were his associates. He, for the life of him, could not understand how the hon. Member could reconcile it to vote against her Majesty's Ministers on one night in opposition to a measure which he deprecated in the strongest terms, and give his next vote to keep that same Government in a position in which they would have an opportunity to carry that obnoxious measure. He could not understand how any representative of our agricultural constituency, could support a Government avowedly inimical to the interests of agriculture. With regard to the question before the House, it was admitted that there was a deficiency in the revenue. Now, he had always considered the financial part of their duties the most important for the Ministers to perform. When the present Government came into office there was a considerable excess of income; and after between twenty and thirty years of peace,

after promising economy and retrenchment, when we found there was a deficiency in the last four or five years of nearly 2,000,000*l.* a-year, though he firmly believed, that when the truth was laid before the House, it would be found to be nearer 6,000,000*l.*,—who could place confidence in the financial arrangements of such a Government? What confidence would the noble Lord himself place in his own steward, if in four or five years there was such a positive falling off in his income? The hon. Member for Liskeard and others had said, "Tell me what the right hon. Baronet would do, in order that I may know how far to place confidence in him." The right hon. Baronet knew, that discretion was the better part of a general, and would keep the secret to himself. If he had any fault to find with the right hon. Baronet it was, that in his kindness he had let out too much already, to the consolation of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who sat like patience in a punt, smiling at grief. The hon. Member for Liskeard in the course of his speech, had made sundry charges against the right hon. Member for Tamworth. He (Colonel Sibthorp) would not presume to repel those charges, or undertake that defence, for the right hon. Baronet did not need his defence. He did not hesitate to say, that her Majesty's Government contrived to keep themselves in office by a species of low cunning, subtlety, dexterity, and duplicity, which could scarcely be equalled by the devil himself. They had shown ingenuity in the way in which they had postponed important measures; and he himself had sat in that House night after night waiting to oppose the Poor-law Amendment Act—that act which was so grinding on the poor—and what was the result? Why, that in the end, the bill was postponed. He would next allude to the Bribery at Elections Bill. This reminded him of what had taken place at St. Alban's and elsewhere, in many other places where the grossest bribery had taken place. That was the way in which the 35,000*l.* annually voted for secret service was disposed of. The noble Lord introduced the bill at such a period that it would be impossible to discuss it with sufficient attention, or introduce such clauses as might be necessary. But, he would ask, was it right, that in June, at an advanced period of the Session, and under the threat of dissolution, they

should be called on to vote a sum of from two to three millions for the civil contingencies and miscellaneous estimates? Why, the whole proceedings adopted by the Government were nothing but a mere attempt at delusion. Could any confidence be placed in a Government guilty of the grossest neglect of duty? He thought, that if they had any sense of what was proper, they ought to resign their situations, and let them be occupied by men of talent, of tried ability, men assiduous in the discharge of their duties, and who would be equal to the emergencies of the country. Now, he wished to call the attention of the House to the sums of money in the shape of salary, which her Majesty's Ministers received. There were three Secretaries of State, each of whom received 13*l.* 3*s.* 11½*d.* a-day. He found, that for the last ten years, the noble Lord opposite had received 50,000*l.* of the public money; the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 50,000*l.*; the Secretary for Ireland, 55,000*l.* Upon the whole, the hon. Gentlemen had received 550,000*l.*, and for what? Why, for doing not merely nothing, but worse than nothing. It was not his intention to trouble the House further than to express his intention cordially to support the motion of the right hon. Baronet.

Mr. Hawes should not feel called upon to answer many of the observations of the hon. and gallant officer, because the line of argument which the gallant Member had taken was only a parody of that taken many years ago by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke (Sir James Graham), when he was an ardent Reformer, and looked closely into the large sums paid to different Ministers. He would, therefore, leave the right hon. Baronet to answer the arguments of his new ally, which he thought utterly unworthy of refutation in that House. If historical precedents were to be referred to as a rule for the steps which this or that Ministry were to take upon certain emergencies, the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Liskeard had fully settled the question; but he utterly denied that any Government at the present day, and especially since the Reform Bill, could have their conduct regulated by precedents drawn from the olden time. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth had referred to the precedents of Walpole and of the year 1784; but he denied that



they could be now guided by precedents of that time, for he thought that statesmen ought now to be mainly guided by the circumstances of the period; and he was warranted in adopting that argument, because he recollected a speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Tamworth, in which he said that so great a change had been effected by the Reform Bill, that the ordinary tactics of party must be given up. Before the Reform Bill, when a majority of the House was returned by close boroughs, the decisions were swayed to and fro by the votes of that independent party, who were supposed to represent in that House the feelings of the country, and the opinions of the people were thus ascertained. The passing of the Reform Bill utterly threw into the shade all former precedents, and the Ministry must now be guided by the best opinion they could form from all sources of the public feeling out of doors. With reference especially to the great commercial question which had been now brought before the House by her Majesty's Ministers, there had been the strongest indication of the feelings of the country. In all the large towns of the empire meetings had been held, which had been joined in by men who had never united before; and those public meetings, held as they had been in open day, and participated in by men of all parties, were sound sources whence her Majesty's Government could gather the public opinion, and by which they ought to be ruled. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Pembroke had referred to the measures which had been brought forward by her Majesty's Government, and which had been rejected or modified by the House, and said that they ought to learn from these things that they had lost the confidence of the House and of the country. He thought that this reference was singularly unfortunate. He entirely overlooked the result of the vote brought forward last Session of a want of confidence of the House, and the result of their measures of the last ten years. The right hon. Gentleman had referred, for one instance in support of his argument, to the English Tithe Bill; he said that it had been supported by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and that without their support it could not have been carried; but he had omitted to tell them, that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth had failed because it was void of the very principle

which gave vitality to the law as it was introduced by her Majesty's Ministers, and as it now stood. Next, the conduct of the Government with respect to the Irish Tithe Bill was an object of vituperation, because of the absence of the Appropriation principle, by which he said her Majesty's Government ought to stand or fall; yet, with regard to that, he must say, that if ever there were a charge coming with less propriety or consistency from any hon. Member, it was such a charge coming from the right hon. Baronet. Had the right hon. Baronet forgotten that the noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire was the author of the 147th clause, which was as much an Appropriation of Church property to secular purposes as any introduced by the present Government? and the noble Lord and the right hon. Gentleman now took this occasion, and thought proper to make it a subject of vituperation and charge against the present Government, because they had given up their Appropriation Clause, whilst they themselves, when in power, had been obliged to give up their own 147th clause. The noble Lord and the right hon. Baronet must be aware that there was as strong language used against their clause, as they had used against their former colleagues. They must recollect the description of their clause given by the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. Yet the noble Lord had given up the 147th clause when he found himself unable to carry it, and surrendered that which he had introduced with great pomp and circumstance to the notice of the House. It was utterly impossible to be guided in questions of this kind at the present day by precedent. If the country were to be properly governed the Ministers must obtain from the best sources they were able, the state of public opinion. Now he believed that there never had been so strong a conviction upon the public mind in favour of any measure, as there was at the present moment in favour of this great change in our commercial policy. As to the charge which had been made, that these measures were only introduced by Ministers to enable them to keep office, it was but a repetition of the very same charge that had been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon when the Reform Bill was introduced. It was because the circumstances of the country were such that the Government were obliged to meet the

House of Commons, and either to propose new taxes, or to modify the tariff, that these measures were introduced, and had been met by an opposition which might almost be summed up in the simple term vituperation. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Kilmarnock, had entirely deviated from the subject before the House, to impute to him and to the hon. Gentleman near him, a desire to pull down the Church. He agreed so fully in the observations of his hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Liskeard, upon this subject, that he need say little upon this point, further than to declare that a more unnecessary and irrelevant charge had never been brought against him. He did maintain the voluntary principle, and he believed that this principle was not hostile to the interests of the Church. When he saw the progress and efficiency of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, when he saw the exertions made by the Dissenters in England, why should he shrink from approving of the voluntary principle, as more likely to conduce to the interests of the Church and of religion than the compulsory principle? When the right hon. Gentleman said, that the Members on that (the Ministerial) side of the House, had been guilty of unconstitutional conduct in supporting the Jamaica Government Bill, and when the right hon. Gentleman took credit to hon. Members opposite for more constitutional devotion in maintaining the Assembly of Jamaica, he could not forget that the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, only opposed that bill that he might give to the House of Assembly a *locus penitentiae*, declaring at the same time that, if they should refuse to discharge their functions, then he would support the bill of the Government. Where, then, was there any of the constitutional devotion to which hon. Gentlemen opposite now laid claim? If the financial difficulties of the country were to be the ground of distrust, he thought that hon. Gentlemen opposite had very little claim to the confidence of the country when it was known that those deficiencies had existed for some years, and they had not brought them forward as a ground of want of confidence. The deficiency was mainly attributed to the introduction of the reduced postage, and the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke said, that he would make that side of the House a present of the Post-

office change. Now, if he had to give his vote again upon this proposal he would repeat that he had already recorded it, and he supported the present measures precisely because he believed that, by a judicious alteration of our tariff, they would enable the Ministers to make many other reductions in our taxes. He was not ashamed of the vote he had then given, and even in the present state of the finances of the country he would be ready to repeat his vote. He rather thought that the gallant Officer opposite (Colonel Sibthorp), who had joined in the complaint, had himself voted for that very measure. But was there anything in the present state of the finances of the country that presented any peculiar source of difficulty? The only difficulty that he saw was, that when measures were brought forward to remove these commercial difficulties, without adding fresh burdens to the people, they found a great political party to contest those measures. If it could be proved that the amount of revenue required could not be raised by an alteration of the tariff, he would be prepared to reconsider the opinion he had formed; but when he found the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, coming forward to raise the question whether the Ministers who possessed the confidence of the Crown, were to be allowed longer to conduct the Government of the country, and when he found that the right hon. Gentleman had not attempted to make any calculation, or to show any ground for a belief that these measures would not raise the required revenue, he was disposed still to think that this alteration of the timber duties, of the corn duties, and of the sugar duties, would raise a large sum, and even more than was necessary for the finances of the country, whilst it would relieve many interests from a great pressure. A great deal had been said, as to what would be the produce of the duty derived from corn; but that was not the question before the House. The question was, whether the alteration of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would give such a stimulus and impetus to the different interests of the country as to make an increase in the whole amount of the revenue. It was said, that the present duty produced more than a million last year. Why, the million last year was one of the causes of the depression of the country, and was one great ground of complaint

against the Corn-laws; and if by an alteration a stimulus were given to trade, the customs and other taxes would yield much more than they now did. And what was this great struggle for? Did hon. Gentlemen opposite mean to say, that the measures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were objectionable and essentially wrong? If they did think thus—if they did, then they were opposed by an unanimity of feeling out of doors. If they did not think that these measures were objectionable and essentially wrong, they were liable to the accusation of acting entirely from party motives, and of opposing the measures they were ready to adopt the very day after they succeeded to office. He would not repeat what had been already so well stated, by the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for Liskeard, that the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman upon the timber duties were unstated, that his opinions upon the corn question were unknown, that upon the sugar duties they were uninformed? What, then, were they struggling about? Was it a struggle to know whether the right hon. Baronet should come into office or not? If so, it was a struggle between two great parties, and it was one in which the people would not take any interest. The people were not struggling for any party advantages, they were struggling for great commercial and fiscal benefits; which, if carried, would confer great advantages upon all classes of the community. The people out of doors would appreciate the contest they were now entering upon. They did not understand what was meant by hon. Gentlemen opposite. They did not stercorally stand on a principle. If they meant to do so, why did they not say in their resolution that they would not admit slave-grown sugar? They refused to do so. Their resolution refused to do so. Again, why did they not say that they would not admit foreign corn? Why did not the right hon. Baronet say, that he meant to adhere to the present scale? The right hon. Baronet came down with a general expression that he would adhere to a sliding scale, and he wished that the farmers of England should understand from this that he would adhere to the present duty. The right hon. Baronet meant, as far as he could to keep out foreign corn, whilst he admitted, that the prosperity of the country depended upon the success of our manufactures, and he meant to disap-

point that great commercial class from receiving a boon offered to them at a time when it might be so beneficially granted. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had not, on any of the great questions which had been discussed, given any information to the House upon the subject of the principles upon which they rested. They must be understood to be struggling for place, and not as opposing those measures in respect of which they were called upon to give their votes. On the part of the people it was a struggle for food unfettered by unjust restrictions, and for wages which their unfettered industry only could secure. He rejoiced that on that occasion the party of which he was a member was led by the noble Lord, in the great struggle which they were undergoing, because he felt, that that noble Lord had the confidence of the people, who esteemed him for his candour, because he had not shrunk from avowing plainly the principles on which he went. They knew well what principles they were supporting, and past events assured them that they knew whom they were supporting. Meetings had taken place throughout the kingdom upon the subject of the Corn-laws, by the results of which the feelings of the people of England had been fairly exhibited. In the corporation of the city of London it was known, that as in another place, there were whippers-in, whose duty was so well known, that it was not necessary for him now to describe it. A meeting had been summoned to consider the commercial questions in dispute, and the circular showed, that the intention of the requisitionists was strictly political, and the object was, to support the present Administration—an object for the attainment of which the Corn-law question afforded an opportunity. At the meeting the question of Corn-laws was fairly discussed, those present were fairly divided, and although the very greatest care had been taken to secure the attendance of the opponents of any alteration being made, by a considerable majority a decision was arrived at in favour of the measures proposed by the Government. Public meetings had been held also in Liverpool, Manchester, Huddersfield, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and in other northern districts, over and over again, and however small might be the majority in that House, however equally the parties in that House might be divided, there was that opinion expressed

out of doors which clearly entitled her Majesty's Ministers to appeal to the people for a decision. Much had been done to bring odium on that side of the House on account of the measures which had been brought forward by those who occupied its benches, but he for one had never thought it his duty to shrink from supporting them. He rejoiced that the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) had referred to these measures, for now that he was going to the bustings he avowed openly, that he abided by all that he had done, and that he was ready to vindicate the course which he had taken. If the right hon. Baronet should succeed in disappointing the expectations of the people—if he should succeed in the noble project of taxing the people to the extent of millions per annum for their sugar, their timber, their coffee; and their corn, he knew not what might be expected to be the result. But from the opinions expressed out of doors, he came to the conclusion, that the people would not suffer this question to rest where it did, but that any prolonged inattention to their wants would be the foundation only for agitation and animosity. He conceived, that the course which was taken by hon. Gentlemen opposite was fatal to their own popularity. The Conservative party were beginning to lean upon their new allies the Chartists, and while they were pandering to the worst passions of those persons, they opposed the wise and beneficial measures propounded by the Government—propounded without party purposes or objects, and solely for the benefit of the people of this country. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had said, that this was not a time at which these questions could receive a fair and calm consideration; but the effect of their continued opposition to measures introduced for the popular advantage would be, that they would band together men who before had never been united; they would go on disappointing the people; and when they saw distress accumulated on distress, they would be surprised to find their demands rise from those of a mere commercial to others of a political nature, and they would find, that they would be unable to restrain those passions which they had themselves excited. That the changes proposed to be made would be of a nature beneficial to the prosperity of the country, he thought could not be doubted. He challenged hon. Gentlemen

to point out the time when any great change had been made in our commercial policy—liberalizing our commerce, and rendering our duties the means only of producing a revenue, as distinguished from their operation as a restriction upon the introduction of foreign commodities, that a result highly beneficial to the country had not been produced. The adoption of such a course by Sir Robert Walpole had been referred to, and the greatest prosperity had marked the course of our commercial career for years afterwards. If he came to a later date—to the time of Mr. Pitt—he should find that a like result had occurred, interrupted undoubtedly by the war. In the time of Mr. Huskisson, the most unequivocal evidence showing the same result had been afforded, and in following this course of policy, therefore, the Government was basing its proceedings not on a speculative principle, but on that which had been proved. He should be glad to hear what were the grounds and principles on which hon. Gentlemen opposite now resisted the proposed change. If hon. Gentlemen could show him that it would be injurious to the country, and that hon. Gentlemen were actuated by some other feeling than that of mere opposition, then, indeed, he should have some ground for believing that there was something more than mere party warfare in their opposition. But the policy of the Government was based on experience, on a system tried before and found to have uniformly produced the same result, and he only regretted that there should be a struggle between the two parties likely to produce an agitation throughout the country prejudicial to the authority of that House, and most injurious to the interests of the people.

Lord Stanley: Mr. Speaker, I have observed, during the course of the late protracted debates, that it is always a favourable omen of the approaching conclusion of a discussion, when the right hon. Gentleman, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade, moves the adjournment of the debate, one night, and commences on the succeeding evening at five o'clock, and as we have this evening obtained that happy omen, I trust we may hail the right hon. Gentleman as the harbinger of the close of the present discussion. Before it terminates, therefore, I am anxious to address a few words to the House in explanation of the grounds on

which I am prepared most cordially to support the motion of my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth. I confess that if any thing could surprise me on the part of her Majesty's Ministers, it would be the course which they have taken on the present occasion—the narrow, and, as it appears to me, the unseemly ground they have occupied, in resisting the proposition before the House. That proposition divides itself into two parts. First, that which, in other times, I should have considered the main and substantial object of the discussion; and, secondly, that which, in other times, would have been considered a mere truism, and a corollary necessarily resulting from the assertion of the first proposition. What is the first proposition? It is this,—that Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons, to enable them to carry through the House measures which they believe to be essential to the public welfare. In what manner has that been met? Has it been met as a Government, strong in the conviction of its own right—strong in the conviction of its own good cause—strong in the support of the people, would have been eager to have met a proposition so directly condemnatory of the whole conduct and proceedings of the administration. I should have imagined that such a Government, if it had not met such a proposition, by a resolution avowing the confidence of Parliament and the country in their proceedings, would at least have taken the bold line of denying, utterly and at once, that they did not possess the confidence of this House and of the country. I should have expected them to have declared, that their measures had been so plain and straightforward—that they had at all times so distinctly avowed their principles and intentions, that, if they did not still retain the confidence of the House, it was owing to no change of conduct on their part, but to a degree of fickleness and vacillation which they could not have anticipated on the part of Parliament. I should have expected them to have told us, that the principles which they laid down on their accession to office they had steadily and strenuously persevered in maintaining—that no dread of unpopularity had induced them to depart from that which they knew to be right—and that they had steadfastly, firmly, and successfully resisted that which in their con-

sciences they believed to be wrong. I should, I say, have expected that on these grounds, namely, the clearness with which they had defined their principles—the steadiness with which they had adhered to them—and the firmness and success with which they had vindicated them, any Government, worthy of the name of a Government, would have met such a proposition as has been submitted to the House by my right hon. Friend. And how have these Ministers—for I can hardly say this Government met the motion before the House? Why, at first, with faint and feeble opposition; and, at last, with a hesitating and reluctant admission of the truth of the proposition. True it is, that the right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, did, at an early period of the debate, venture on an hesitating defence of the Government, and declare, that it was not quite so bad as my right hon. Friend had represented it to be. True, he did produce a list of certain motions, which he said the Government had succeeded in carrying in the course of the last five or six years. The right hon. Baronet said,

“True, we have sustained defeats on many occasions. On more than one occasion we have been compelled to abandon—on more than one we have been defeated in attempting to carry, our measures. We have received the suggestions and corrections, and have deferred to the commands, of hon. Gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House. Those hon. Gentlemen have generally dictated the course of our proceedings; but it cannot be denied, that we have been able to carry some measures, from 1835 down to the present time.”

Now, I think that my hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, completely demolished the whole of that argument. The right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, enumerated the whole of the measures, which, he said, Government had been able to carry; and my right hon. Friend, in following him, went through the list, *seriatim*, and showed that there was not one of the measures, as to which Ministers had not received the support of their political opponents. Yes, I repeat, that my right hon. Friend showed, that there was not one of the measures referred to by the right hon. President of the Board of Control, upon which a division had been taken by the political opponents of the Government, either on the first, second, or third reading, or on any clauses materially affecting the principles



of the bills, with the single exception of the Irish Corporation Bill, which was at last passed, only because Ministers adopted the franchise insisted upon by this side of the House. "But," says the right hon. the Vice-President of the Board of Trade,

"What blame can you attach to us, if our measures were so pure and unexceptionable, as to command the respect and support even of our political opponents?"

The argument is a plausible one; but what if those measures did not, originally, belong to Ministers—what if they were borrowed from their political opponents? What if those measures belonged to the Governments of Earl Grey and Sir Robert Peel, and were adopted by you, and passed with the support and assistance—aye, and in almost every case, with the modifications suggested by your opponents? What can be more unjust, than that you should adopt measures which originated with your opponents, and then seek to obtain exclusive merit for them? I will not, at the conclusion of this long debate, weary the House by referring to any point which my right hon. Friend, the Member for Pembroke, has already adverted to, in a speech which, as yet, has received no answer from any hon. Gentleman opposite. There was, however, one point upon which my right hon. Friend omitted to animadvert. He proved, clearly and distinctly, that the Government have never succeeded in carrying a single measure against the will, and without the consent, of their political opponents. He proved distinctly that there were many measures which they were compelled to abandon after they had been defeated on divisions, and others which they abandoned without venturing to go to a division. But there is one circumstance which my right hon. Friend omitted to touch upon, which exhibits most strongly the weakness and impotence of the Government, and clearly demonstrates the truth of the resolution proposed by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth,—that Ministers do not possess sufficiently the confidence of the House of Commons to enable them to carry measures which they deem to be essential to the welfare of the country. I will undertake to prove to the House, that Ministers not only do not possess the confidence of their opponents, but even of those persons who call themselves

their supporters. I will show that many hon. Gentlemen opposite, who are about to give their support to, and declare their confidence in, the Government, have, on many important occasions, opposed them. I will show you that, more than once, or twice (I might say more than twenty times), in the course of the last five years, during which you, the Ministers, have held the reins of Government, you have been fain, in resisting measures brought forward by your own nominal supporters, which you deemed injurious to the best interests of the country, to call—and you never called in vain—for the assistance of your political opponents to defeat your political supporters. Will the House permit me, without going back to an earlier period than the session of 1838, to call to its recollection the powerful support which Ministers were able to command, in the ranks of their own supporters, upon questions the rejection of which was deemed essential to the public interest? In 1838, the Ballot had not become an open question. In that year the present Government, in the present Parliament, declared, as a Government, that they would strenuously oppose the adoption of the Ballot. Mr. Grote at that time brought forward his motion for the introduction of the vote by Ballot, and the Government brought their forces to bear against it. If I recollect rightly, the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, addressed the House in opposition to the motion, which was, indeed, resisted by the whole strength of the Government, and upon a division, the numbers were—Ayes 198; Noes 315. This was a satisfactory defeat of a proposition which the Government, at that time, concurred with us in considering dangerous to the public interests. Now, how many votes did Ministers contribute from their own supporters towards the defeat of Mr. Grote's motion? The ayes exclusively consisted of those Gentlemen who are now about to vote their confidence in Government—who look to the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, as their leader in political matters—and who are ready to declare that they yield implicit deference to his opinion. To meet this hundred and ninety-eight of his own supporters, the noble Lord produced just sixty-five votes, including sixteen Gentlemen who held offices; whilst of the 315 Members who defeated the 198 supporters of the Government, the Conservative party fur-

nished no less than 250. On the 28th of February, 1839, Mr. O'Connell moved for leave to bring in a bill to assimilate the franchise in England and Ireland, and to make the same more extensive. Upon that occasion the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, mustered courage, and declared he must meet the proposition with a decided negative. The noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, also spoke against the motion; and when we came to a division, the ayes, consisting exclusively of the supporters of the Government, were ninety-two, and the noes 155—of whom the Government furnished just forty-nine, including twenty-one Gentlemen in office, and the Conservative party furnished 106. On the 21st of March, in the same year, the hon. Member for Kilkenny moved for leave to bring in a bill to amend the Reform Act, which motion was resisted by the Government. On that occasion the hon. Member for Kilkenny brought up fifty Gentlemen to vote for him, and the motion was negatived by eighty-five; but of this number of eighty-five, the Conservative party furnished fifty-six, and the Government only twenty-nine. One instance more, and I have done. On the 4th of June, 1839, the hon. Member for Preston proposed to bring in a bill to alter the qualification of voters for counties in England. That motion was, as I recollect, opposed, in person, by the talents and eloquence of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies; but the noble Lord's eloquence was not very persuasive with his own party; for the motion being rejected by a majority of 207, I find that the noble Lord's supporters contributed thirty-nine votes, including twelve Gentlemen in office, whilst their Conservative opponents assisted them with the small force of 168. Now, I have produced four instances, in the course of two Sessions, in which the Government have been hostilely encountered by their own supporters. Motions were brought forward which Ministers considered dangerous to the public welfare; and, in every instance, if the Conservative party had been absent from their posts, the Government would have been defeated by their own supporters, and by large majorities—whereas, in each and every one of those cases, if the Ministers had been absent to a man, with all the votes they brought to bear upon the question, the results would not have been different—the Conservative

strength was, in itself sufficient, and in most cases by considerable majorities, to defeat the attempts of the Friends of the Government. I refer to these occasions as completing the case necessary to establish the great influence and power which the Government possesses in the present House! But I might almost have spared the House the trouble of listening to these details, because, in point of fact, the noble Secretary for Ireland frankly and fairly confessed, that, with respect to the first branch of my right hon. Friend's motion, there could be no difference of opinion. The noble Lord, speaking of the financial measures of the Government, said, "I admit that we do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House to enable us to carry our measures." Was there ever such an admission made by a Government before? Suppose that, in any other time, my right hon. Friend had brought forward this proposition, and this alone—the first branch, observe, of his present motion—that the Government do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House of Commons, to enable them to carry their measures through that House—just pause for a moment, and consider what must be the position of a Government, who, to that single proposition, is bound to reply—"We admit your allegation: we are unable to dispute it." Why, in any other time, would not such an admission have been regarded as conclusive proof, that the Government was unworthy to conduct the affairs of the country? But my right hon. Friend was well aware that Ministers were very slow at taking a hint. He knew that very significant hints had been repeatedly administered during the course of past Sessions—he knew that it was necessary not to leave them a single loophole through which they could escape the decision of the question, as affecting their whole political existence; and, therefore, my right hon. Friend added to his first proposition, which is admitted, that which, I confess, appears to me to be a truism, namely, that Ministers are acting contrary to the spirit of the constitution, when, having lost the confidence of the House, they continue to retain their offices. But to my astonishment, and that of the whole country—to the astonishment, I believe, of many of those faithful followers who sit behind the noble Lord opposite, and are about to be dragged reluctantly into this division—the noble Lord, admitting the first proposition,

finds it convenient to demur to the second, and says, " Although we have not the confidence of the House, it is not incumbent on us to retire. We have yet some chances to try—we have yet some turns to take. It does not necessarily follow, because we are without power, that we must also be without office." Weak as I consider that position to be, I think that the arguments by which it is sought to be maintained are the most extraordinary I ever heard fall from the lips of men charged with official responsibility in this great country. Least of all should I have expected such a position to have been taken up, and such arguments to have been propounded, by Whig Ministers—by those who profess to respect popular feeling and the popular voice—as have proceeded from the right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, and the right hon. the Secretary at War. Why, what said the right hon. Baronet? He stated—and I cannot be mistaken as to his words, because he was contrasting what he was pleased to consider the existing favourable circumstances of the Government, with the unfavourable position in which they were placed, when they first accepted office—he stated, in my hearing, and to my extreme astonishment, that it is not the duty of Ministers to resign, although they do not possess the confidence of the House of Commons, or the power of carrying their measures through it, because, forsooth, they do possess the favour of the Crown. I am sure I am not in the slightest degree misrepresenting the language of the right hon. Baronet, because, as if in order, that no doubt might arise upon the point, he followed up that declaration with these emphatic words:—"which, let me tell you, is the best support any Ministry can have." And these are the words which fell from a Whig Minister!—which fell from a man who was, at one time, the ardent and almost enthusiastic defender of popular rights! This is the language which fell from the Member for Nottingham! These are the doctrines which, in his place, a Cabinet Minister presumes to address to the assembled Commons of Great Britain! I know not whether the right hon. Baronet is in the House; but if he be not, I tell his colleagues for him, that, in my judgment, there can be no higher responsibility—no deeper or graver offence against the constitution—than for a Minister to dare to whisper such doc-

trine in the ear of a Sovereign of the House of Brunswick. I tell you, that of the personal favour of the Crown we know nothing, and ought to know nothing, in this House; and deep, indeed, is the crime of that Minister, who, fancying that he possesses that personal favour, presumes to abuse it for the furtherance of the selfish purposes of his own party, or the interests of his Government; but deeper still is his guilt, who dares to use the name and supposed favour of his Sovereign, for the purpose of overawing the discussions of this House, and fettering the free expressions of the feelings of the representatives of the people. Another argument which I heard used by another Cabinet Minister, the Secretary at War, was, that it mattered little whether the Government were able to carry their legislative measures, as long as they were visited by no censure from this House, on the ground of their exercise of their administrative or executive functions. A doctrine more fatal to the power and influence of the House of Commons was never broached, nor one that would so completely screen a bad or incompetent Minister, by overthrowing the influence of the House of Commons over Administrations, and leaving, not the appointment only, but the maintenance in power, of every Government, in the hands of the Crown, and of the Crown alone. I heard this doctrine advanced by the right hon. Gentleman who sits opposite to me with great astonishment; but I was greatly relieved when I found that it rested on the authority—high as it may deservedly be—of the right hon. Gentleman himself, but upon no other. I know the right hon. Gentleman's learning, his historical research, and his deep and intimate acquaintance with the constitutional history of his country; I know, likewise, the acuteness with which he can bring to bear the stores of his knowledge on the subject-matter of debate; and, therefore, I am perfectly satisfied, not only that if he had been able to find any vindication or authority for his doctrine, he would have produced it in this discussion; but also, that if there were any such authority or vindication in existence, it could not have escaped his research. Now, I ask the right hon. Gentleman to follow up his doctrine, and to tell me when, in the history of this country, a Ministry has ever been displaced by a vote of the House of



Commons upon the ground on which, and on which alone, he alleges it can be so displaced? I believe there is, in the history of Parliament, no instance of a Government being removed from office upon a vote of the House of Commons, censuring their administration of affairs—I mean the executive administration of affairs, apart from their legislative measures. The mode in which want of confidence is signified to an administration is, by the rejection of their measures submitted to Parliament. I am ready to admit, that of all motions which can be made—of all questions which can be submitted to the House, an absolute vote of censure on an existing administration is one that puts to the highest test the feelings of the House of Commons against that Administration. It is the last vote to which Gentlemen will come, who have been cordially and for a long time the supporters of a Government. They will vote against their legislative measures—they will vote against their general policy—but they feel a natural, and I will not say a blameable repugnance, to supporting an absolute vote of want of confidence, or an entire censure on an Administration which they have long been in the habit of supporting. I admit this frankly and fairly to the hon. Gentlemen opposite; but, then, I call upon them to admit, on the other hand, that if that be the case, it is a vote on which a small majority, in favour of an Administration, is equivalent to a decided defeat on any other motion; and one upon which a majority against the Government is the utter annihilation of the possibility of their retaining office. I think the right hon. Baronet, the President of the Board of Control, went on to say, that a single defeat upon a legislative measure is no ground for a Minister resigning his office. I frankly admit that it is not; but is this the case of a single defeat? Is it a case of one, two, three, four, five, six—I know not how many—defeats which the Government have sustained on important questions? I tell right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have boasted much of the tranquillity, happiness, and freedom of Jamaica, that if that colony be happy, prosperous, and contented, in the enjoyment of a free constitution, it is because her Majesty's Ministers were overruled by us, in regard to the measures they proposed respecting it. I tell them, that if the Church in this coun-

try, and more especially in Ireland, be in the quiet enjoyment of its revenues and legitimate influence, it is because her Majesty's Ministers could not carry the measures they proposed respecting it. I tell them, that if the national system of education introduced into this country be not altogether disconnected from all the forms of religion, it is because they could not accomplish their objects. I tell them, also, that if the finances of this country are, as no man can deny, in a state of deplorable deficiency and embarrassment, it is because, of all the branches of their policy, that is the only one in which they have not been checked and controlled by their political opponents. I cannot afford, therefore, to make the noble Secretary for Ireland a present of all previous Ministerial defeats. I cannot permit him to pass over quietly, as he is disposed to do, all the propositions abandoned—bills forsaken—pledges which he and his colleagues have been compelled to violate—and the principles which they have, if not entirely repudiated, at all events, left in abeyance. The noble Lord, however, was driven to confess, that Ministers are now in a position in which they do not sufficiently possess the confidence of the House to be able to carry their measures through it. With respect to the right hon. President of the Board of Control, even when he is right in his assertion that a single defeat is not a sufficient cause for the retirement of a Government, he is singularly unfortunate in his illustration, the more so, as he took on him to correct my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, on a point of history. In illustration of his position, that a Government is not bound to resign upon a single defeat, the right hon. Baronet referred to the case of Sir Robert Walpole's defeat upon the Excise question. Now, Sir Robert Walpole, it is true, was compelled to abandon his project relative to the Excise, but not by a vote of the House of Commons. When he brought forward the project, he was, on five or six several occasions, supported by large majorities in its favour. He was supported in that scheme by the confidence of the House of Commons; but he yielded to strong indications of popular discontent, and ultimately withdrew it. Whether it be wise or prudent in a Minister to yield to indications of popular feeling, apart from its expression through the

representatives of the people, is not the question which I now have to discuss. It is sufficient for me to show, that he did not abandon his measure in consequence of the withdrawal of the confidence of the House of Commons, which, indeed, he continued to enjoy for a period of no less than seven or eight years after that time. But, Sir, I have referred to the history of Sir Robert Walpole, and I think, that if there be one part of it to which his admirers must look back with pain, and in which future Ministers must read an instructive warning, it is that which is comprised in the closing Session or two of his political career. Sir Robert Walpole had, for a very long period enjoyed the confidence of the House of Commons—he had enjoyed the confidence of the House of Lords—he had enjoyed the confidence of the Crown. He had administered the affairs of this great country, with a degree of energy and success almost unparalleled for so long a time. But the period at length arrived when he lost the support of a portion of his colleagues. Sir Robert Walpole then suffered himself to be overborne in his own cabinet. He permitted himself to be drawn into, and become responsible, for measures of which he himself had disapproved. He plunged the country, not indeed into the miseries of eternal strife and civil discord, but into the misfortunes of a popular war—a war called for by the popular voice, but a war of which he foresaw the evils and disasters. And why did Sir Robert Walpole do this? He did it in deference to the earnest entreaty of his Sovereign, whom he had faithfully served, and who for him, almost exclusively of all his colleagues, entertained respect and esteem. He did it in obedience to the passions of the people out of doors—to passions which had been stimulated and excited, even by some of those who sat in the same cabinet with him. And, from the moment when he thus unwisely yielded, the power which Sir Robert Walpole once possessed was gone. Place remained to him, but the authority with which it had been invested was no more. Divided councils brought with them inefficient action. Feebleness in every department of the Government succeeded to previous energy. Defeat for a Session or two—actual defeat—was evaded or escaped by ignominious concessions, and humiliating compromises. But the hour of defeat came at last; and,

after a long life of useful service to the country, that power which Sir Robert Walpole might have resigned with a dignity which would have commanded the respect of all men, if he had had the courage to act on his own opinions, was wrested from him by a majority of the House of Commons; and he fell at last, the less respected, and the less regretted, because he fell too late and too reluctantly. I cannot but think, that there is at least one Minister of the present day, who may find, in the history of Sir Robert Walpole, matter for serious reflection; and who, perchance, may hereafter look back on his own course with unavailing regret, when he views in it a repetition of Walpole's weakness, and of Walpole's fall. The right hon. Gentleman, the Judge Advocate, not quite satisfied with the defence set up for the Government, on the two points to which I have referred, took another ground, and told us, that the Crown had the power of dissolving Parliament. He told us, that that was their alternative to the motion of my right hon. Friend—the alternative of dissolution, rather than resignation. The right hon. Gentleman contended, that the question was not whether the Government ought to resign or not, but whether they should dissolve the present Parliament. I say, with all respect to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that this is not, and cannot be, the question before the House. It is not a question which ever ought to come before the House of Commons, or ever ought to be alluded to. No doubt the Crown has the power of dissolving Parliament, if her Majesty should think fit to do so. That is a prerogative of the Crown, with which the House of Commons have no right—as I am sure they have no desire—to interfere. For my own part, I venture to say, that Gentlemen on this side of the House do not deprecate a dissolution. I believe, that the country at large is anxiously awaiting a dissolution, to enable it to relieve itself, by its own exertion, from an Administration which has too long crippled its energies. But with the advice of dissolution the House of Commons has nothing to do. It is the prerogative of the Crown, to be exercised by the responsible advisers of the Crown; and for its exercise—for the time—for the mode—for the occasion—and for all the circumstances attending a dissolution, the advisers of the Crown will

be responsible to a future Parliament. And now, let me ask, what is it that the Government seek for by a dissolution of Parliament? What is there to justify them in taking the course of dissolving Parliament at the present moment? I say, I do not shrink from that proceeding—I do not deprecate it; but the country has a right to know why we are threatened with dissolution; and it will inquire under what circumstances, and for what purposes, Ministers have advised her Majesty to take that step? Ministers will say, that it is for the purpose of effecting an alteration in the duties on sugar, corn, and timber, on part of which scheme they have already sustained, as on the other part they know they will sustain, a defeat. In what position, I ask, would the country be placed in the event—an improbable supposition, I allow—of the success of Ministers? Would the result be to render the motion of the great political machine more easy? Would it facilitate the harmonious carrying on and working of the Government in the service of the country? Would it bring the two Houses of Parliament into greater harmony than they are at present? It would effect none of those objects. At the present moment, the two Houses of Parliament are, as far as we have any reason to believe, in perfect accordance of opinion with respect to the questions which her Majesty's Ministers have thought proper to bring into agitation. The House of Commons condemns the project of the Government; the House of Lords, we have every reason to believe, would condemn it also. If, however, the Government should unexpectedly succeed in their endeavours, and obtain some trifling majority of one or two in the House of Commons, in favour of their policy, the happy result of their operations will be, that they, who are charged with the responsibility of Government, and intrusted with the duty of carrying on the service of the Crown and of the country, will have created a difficulty for themselves, and have placed the two now accordant branches of the Legislature in a state of irreconcilable difference of opinion. But there is an object to be gained by it. It is a desperate effort, by means of agitation and excitement—an effort which, I am convinced, the good sense of the people will repudiate, and visit with signal discomfiture—to prop up for a while a tottering Admini-

stration. I say, however, that we have no right to anticipate a dissolution. This House, in discussing measures, must discuss them in the supposition of the permanence of its own existence for the period which the constitution assigns to it. This House has no right to anticipate that the Crown will exercise its prerogative—a prerogative which it can exercise when it pleases, but which it is bound to exercise without interfering with the independent action of the Legislature, by hanging over it the menace of dissolution. For what reason is it, that, since the passing of the Septennial Act, there has been, I believe, scarcely an instance of Parliament having arrived at the natural term of its existence? Why has the term of the existence of Parliaments always been abridged? Why, for this good reason—that it is considered desirable that a House of Commons, elected by the people, should exercise an independent judgment, and not be every moment looking to the effect to be produced upon the hustings by each vote and speech in this House. It is in order that we may carry on our discussions for the good of the people, and not be seeking occasions for pandering to their passions. It is in order that we may exercise our functions freely and independently; and, if we do not so exercise them, we are unworthy of the name of legislators, and degrade ourselves into the occupation of political agitators. In 1807, Mr. Canning let fall an expression in the course of debate, which intimated the probability that Parliament would shortly after that time be dissolved. These were his words:—

“Whatever might be the issue of the division that night, the Ministry were determined to stand on the prerogative of the Crown, and if necessary, make an appeal to the country on the subject.”

Was that intimation received with great approbation by one who is at present the colleague of the Gentlemen whom I see opposite? Lord Henry Petty immediately rose and said,

“However that House might be attacked by the Government—however it might be threatened—he, for one, relied on the manly spirit of the House, that no threat would be capable of influencing their deliberations, or altering their opinions.”

That was the mode in which Lord Henry Petty, now the Marquess of Lansdowne, a member of the present Govern-

ment, treated what seemed to be a threat of dissolution, intended to influence, by intimidation, the deliberations of the House of Commons. What said Lord Howick—not the noble Lord whom I see opposite—what said that Lord Howick to whose opinions, when they happen to be in accordance with their own, hon. Members are so ready to pay respect—whose authority they are so anxious to enlist in their cause, even although there is not one of them who will venture to rise in his place and declare that that noble Lord agrees with them? What was the language of Lord Grey, who was referred to in the course of this debate by my hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Exeter, as withholding his sanction from the rash and reckless course which the Government is now pursuing, and whose relative—almost the nearest he has in the House—rose immediately after, without venturing to offer any contradiction to the assertion of my hon. and learned Friend? What said that Lord Howick, in the lobby of this House, in 1807, while the division was going on? He requested the attention of the Members around him, and told them, that, if the original question should be negatived, it would, perhaps, be necessary to propose an address to the Throne to meet the threat held out that evening—a threat unexampled in the annals of Parliament. On a subsequent night, Mr. Shaw Lefevre condemned the threat held out by Mr. Canning; and Mr. Whitbread said, that

“The most pusillanimous Parliament would not suffer itself to be deterred from the prosecution of its public duty by such a threat—the most indecent, indiscreet, and unparliamentary that could possibly be thrown out.”

This was the language used in 1807, when a Minister of the Crown held out an intimation that Parliament was about to be dissolved, with a view to influence the proceedings of the House of Commons. Now, I place Government in this dilemma. Are they about to advise the Crown to dissolve? They say they have the alternative of dissolution, or resignation of office. I say, that we, sitting here as the representatives of the people, cannot infer that a dissolution is about to take place. It is not right that we should carry on our discussions under that menace and intimidation; and I say I am bound, therefore, to assume, that a dissolution is not about to be advised by the

Government. But if it be about to be advised, then, I say, we are placed in a position in which no Minister of the Crown has a right to place Parliament. We are called upon to discuss great questions, and to agitate important interests. We are not called upon to pass great legislative measures; but Government proposes to bring forward these great measures for discussion without the hope of their being carried, and that, too, expressly because they are about to dissolve Parliament, and appeal to the people. And the noble Lord opposite thinks it a constitutional proceeding, that, with such expectations and anticipations, we should carry on our debates in this House. I was told the other day, that I was a most unworthy pupil of Mr. Huskisson. I recollect the language which Mr. Huskisson used in 1826; and as hon. Gentlemen opposite are very fond of appealing to the authority of that Statesman, I request their attention to the words which I am about to read. On the 18th of April, 1826, Mr. Wolryche Whitmore moved, that the House should resolve itself into a Committee, “to consider the present state of the Corn-laws.” Now, mark the language which Mr. Huskisson applied to a debate on the Corn-laws, brought forward in expectation of an immediately approaching general election. He said,

“His purpose was to persuade the House not to engage in this discussion, because he was convinced that it could only terminate in inconvenience and embarrassment. It was almost universally admitted, that there were certain questions which it would be much better to leave in a state of abeyance until they could be more fully discussed in a new Parliament. If there was one question more unfit than another to be entertained at the present moment, it was this, relative to the Corn-laws. No question was more calculated to agitate the House, and to set afloat in the country notions which might give rise to general inconvenience; and he thought, therefore, that unless the House were prepared to go through with it—unless they were convinced that this opportunity, and this time, were convenient for dealing with so momentous and difficult a subject as the state and system of the Corn-laws, it ought not to be taken up. He would fairly own, that, at this period of the Session, when everybody was looking forward to the probability of a general election, he thought that nothing could be less advisable than to agitate the subject. He repeated, that if, at this moment, the House should raise (as the discussion of this subject was necessarily calculated to do) a great en-

citement in the public mind, it would be impossible to conduct the debate with that calmness which ought to characterise the deliberations of a British House of Commons."

That was the opinion of Mr. Huskisson as to the prudence, the policy, and the Parliamentary character of that course of proceeding, of introducing a discussion on the Corn-laws, on the eve of a general election. But what would he have said, if it had been proposed that the Corn-laws should be discussed in this House, with a view to their being made the very pivot on which a general election should turn? What would he have said, if, to all the considerations which attach to the question of the Corn-laws itself—their influence on prices and the wages of the labourer—their influence on the well-being of the humbler classes of the community—what would he have said, if it had been proposed to combine with these considerations, sufficiently grave and important in themselves, the question of the existence, as a Government, of one of the two great parties that divide the country? Why, the excitement and agitation arising out of the discussion of the question itself must be increased tenfold when it is known, that on the decision of that question, will turn the government of the country for years to come. Yet it is at such a time, and under such circumstances, with the tremendous risk arising from the nature of the agitation, that her Majesty's Ministers dare to come forward and invoke it. An address has been put into my hands to-day, which is a specimen of the calm and temperate mode in which the people are appealed to, on the eve of a general election, and just previously to a discussion in Parliament on the question of the Corn-laws. I will read a passage to the House.—[Here the noble Lord read an extract to the following effect:—

"That by prompt exertions the people might get rid of the financial difficulties of the country, without resorting to additional taxation; but that, by the rejection of the plan, the sources of labour to the industrious workman, and of profit to the manufacturer, would be destroyed, and great impediments be thrown in the way of our commercial prosperity."

And then comes an appeal, which I thought had been exclusively confined to the good taste and prudence of the noble Secretary for Ireland:—("Arise, then, all ye Christian men, who look for the bread

of life—will you let your fellow-men starve for want of food?") And this appeal for support to the Government, is addressed to that constituency which is now represented by her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, the leader of this House! I am far from thinking, for a single moment, that the noble Lord is in any way connected with, or even cognisant of, that address. I am sure I should be insulting the good taste and feeling of the noble Lord, if I for a moment thought him guilty of being capable of such a production. I refer to it merely for the purpose of showing the calm and temperate language which is employed, in the endeavour to excite the people, on the eve of a general election, at a time when the House of Commons is called on to deliberate upon a question of the most exciting nature that can be placed before the country. [An hon. Member: "Who signed the address?"] It is not signed—it is a printed paper. Before I sit down, I wish to address a few words, and they shall be only a few, to those hon. Members who profess, and, I have no doubt, sincerely, great regard for the agricultural interest—Gentlemen, who form a part of that unfortunate class, who, by the supporters of her Majesty's Ministers, are stigmatized as grinders of the poor, monopolists, and every thing else that is odious. The hon. Member for Lambeth, told us this evening, that an appeal is about to be made to the public, not on any general or undefined question—not to decide whether this or that man shall be at the head of the Government—but, simply, on this distinct question—whether or not the country will do away with the corn monopoly, which is the cause of various other monopolies? [Mr. Hawes: "Not the corn only."] Well, then, according to the hon. Member, Ministers are about to appeal to the country, for the purpose of inducing the constituencies to return such a House of Commons as will effectually put down all those great interests of the country, which they are pleased to call monopolies, of which interests that of the landowners and agriculturists is, in their mind, the first, the greatest, and the most atrocious. The question is fairly put by the hon. Member for Lambeth; and it is the question on which Government are about to dissolve Parliament. Ministers are pledged to use all their power in the next Parliament to effect their object. That is the issue which

they are putting to the country—that is the issue on which they are asking for the support of the present House of Commons. This being the case, it appears to me that the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, made us of a very singular argument the other night, in opposition to the motion of my right hon. Friend. He said,

“How can I refuse to vote my confidence in the Government—I, who concur, not only in the measures which they have carried, but in those which they have abandoned. I concur in the principles which they have abandoned. I recorded my dissent from the abandonment of those principles; and that is the first ground on which I refuse my assent to the proposition, that they are not able to carry their measures through this House.”

Then, said the noble Lord, I am going to vote confidence in the Ministers, because, next week, they intend to bring forward an important measure, on which they rest the existence of the Government. [“No, no.” *From the Ministerial benches.*] Oh! you do not! It is very difficult to understand what your intentions really are! You did not rest the existence of your Government on the question of the sugar duties. Well! I will say that Ministers are about to bring forward a measure which they deem essential to the well-being and prosperity of the country; and the noble Lord, the Member for Lincolnshire, states, that he will not withhold his confidence from them, because he is convinced that, however loudly they may talk—however deeply they may pledge themselves—however much they may pretend to bring forward that measure, he knows they have not the power to carry it through the House of Commons. This is the excellent reason the noble Lord assigns for refusing to assent to the proposition of my right hon. Friend, which declares, that Ministers do not sufficiently possess the confidence of this House to enable them to carry their measures through it. The noble Lord’s argument is undoubtedly a very extraordinary one: whether it is an argument which will prove very satisfactory to his constituents, remains to be seen. I wish, however, to put this consideration to the noble Lord, and others who profess themselves to be the exclusive friends of the agricultural interest. In a paper which supports the measures of the Government, and which is supposed to be their organ, I noticed a very significant intimation the other day. It was this —

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“After all, the motion of the right hon. Gentleman may be of advantage to the Government. It may give time to constitutional organization, and to make proper arrangements for a dissolution, by which they would have a better chance of defeating and destroying the monopoly of the agricultural interests.”

I do not think that Ministers will venture to take the course recommended by their organ of the press. But, suppose that they were prepared to do so: in a House so equally divided, when the decision of the question may depend on two or three votes to be given on one side or the other, what if Ministers should obtain the opportunity of organizing a successful opposition to the agricultural interests throughout the country, and that opportunity should be given them by the votes of two or three Members for the most agricultural county in England. I would suggest to the consideration of the noble Lord and his colleague, whether it will be considered that their votes in favour of the Government, on this occasion, will be perfectly balanced by the vote they intend to give against the Government proposition relative to the Corn-laws. I put it to those who profess themselves anxious to sustain the agricultural interest, whether they can justify themselves for giving to Ministers what the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, designated the other day as “no very extended period” for maturing the measure which they have in contemplation. It is impossible for me to pass by those Gentlemen who call themselves the friends of the agricultural interests, without saying a few words in answer to what appeared to me to be a very uncalled for attack, which was made upon me the other night by the hon. Member for Lincolnshire. The matter of accusation was simply this. That whereas, in 1835, I declined to form part of the Administration of my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, stating, that I had not sufficient confidence in the measures which his Government was likely to adopt, to take upon myself the responsibility of joining, in an official capacity, an Administration which I yet declared I hoped to be able to support, I am now, after seven years of the most unreserved political intercourse—after the most entire and cordial concurrence with my right hon. Friend on all political questions—after the most intimate and confidential communications between us, as to his and my opinions—prepared to take upon myself my humble share of whatever responsibility may devolve upon him. From the charge of inconsistency, involved

in that accusation, I do not think it worth while to defend myself. I will rather submit to the entire weight of the castigation inflicted upon me by the eloquence of the hon. Member. It is to me a matter of the most perfect indifference, whether the hon. Member writes himself down a Tory, or any thing else; but I confess it startled me to hear the hon. Member declare, at a time when he was attacking me for my inconsistencies, that he should belie the whole course of his political life, if he were now to be found writing himself down a Tory. I thought I recollected, and I believe there is no doubt of the fact, that whatever opinions the hon. Member may now hold, from 1820 to 1826, he had not the least hesitation in writing himself down a Tory. During that time, the hon. Member was, if I mistake not, one of the warmest and most strenuous supporters of Lord Liverpool's Government. In 1821, and, I believe, again in 1825, the hon. Member gave his vote against motions for inquiry merely into the justice of the Roman Catholic claims. In 1822, he gave his vote against a motion brought forward by the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, in favour of Parliamentary Reform; and through the whole of that Parliament he continued to be the most uncompromising and devoted adherent of a Tory Ministry. I believe, that subsequently to that period, the complaint of the hon. Member, though not in Parliament, against the Duke of Wellington's Administration, was, that it conceded Catholic emancipation; and it was not until Earl Grey came into possession of power, that the hon. Member came out in the new character of a consistent Reformer. It is true, I believe, that the hon. Member was a very constant supporter of Earl Grey's Administration, as he had been of that of Lord Liverpool; and when my right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, came into office in 1835, if I much mistake not, the hon. Member did me the honour of consulting me as to the course which he should take on that occasion—not liking to give an absolute refusal of his support to the right hon. Baronet's Government—and although I cannot claim the honour of having long retained the confidence of the hon. Member, I do find, that, either in accordance with advice which I may have taken the liberty to give him, or from his own unbiassed judgment, he did give his vote in favour of Mr. Manners Sutton for Speaker, as against the candidate whom her Majesty's present advisers proposed for that office.

My right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, was in a minority on that occasion, and it somehow or other happened, that he subsequently had not the advantage of the hon. Member's support. From that time to the present, I am ready to admit, the hon. Member has been a steady supporter of Lord Melbourne's Administration, as he was previously of Lord Grey's, and, before that, of Lord Liverpool's. These, I have no doubt, are the slight and venial inconsistencies into which, as my noble Friend, the Member for Shropshire, said, last night, all great statesmen occasionally fall; but, if great statesmen are guilty of these inconsistencies, they should at least have a little mercy on those less distinguished individuals who, at a humble distance, follow in their steps; and I would particularly advise the hon. Member to abstain in future from making personal charges, more especially when there is a chance that, from however humble a quarter, such charges may be retorted on him. The hon. Member took leave to ask my right hon. Friend, what answer he should give to the farmers of Lincolnshire as to his future policy: a point upon which the hon. Member says, he and the farmers of Lincolnshire feel extreme alarm. Now, I think, that when my right hon. Friend seeks for an expositor of his policy to any portion of the community, he will hardly apply to the hon. Member; I am, moreover, inclined to think, that when the hon. Member meets the farmers of Lincolnshire, he will have quite enough to do to answer for himself, without undertaking the somewhat superfluous task of answering for my right hon. Friend. I say, that neither the hon. Member nor the Government has any right to call upon my right hon. Friend to state what course he would feel it his duty to take upon any particular question, in the possible event of his being charged with official responsibility. I recollect that, when I first came in to Parliament, Mr. Tierney, a great Whig authority, used always to say, that the duty of an opposition was very simple—it was, to oppose everything, and propose nothing.

Lord John Russell: And to turn out the Government.

Lord Stanley: Ay, and to turn out the Government. That was the political creed of Mr. Tierney, as to the duty of any opposition; but I must say that if ever there was an opposition which has gone out of its way to avoid limiting itself to the performance of the duty prescribed by that

high authority—if ever there was an opposition which hesitated to embarrass the Government when bringing forward their measures—if ever there was an opposition which, not only abstained from offering factious opposition to the measures of Government, but, on the contrary, lent its best advice and assistance to suggest alterations and improvements, and to carry, with the concurrence of the Government, such modifications as might ensure for their measures legislative sanction, here and elsewhere,—It is the opposition with which I have the honour to be connected. I must, however, say, that although we have not factiously opposed the Government—although we have endeavoured honestly to discharge our duty to the public, by giving our best assistance and support, without reference to the quarter from which they proceeded, to measures which we believed to be beneficial to the country, there is a time and a limit at which the duty of forbearance and longer patience becomes a crime against the people of England. There is a time when the measure of the iniquities of a Government is full. There is a time when, if they refuse to listen to the voice of friendly warning, or to attend to gentler hints, forbearance must end, and the plainest language must be spoken to them. To those limits, and to that position, in respect to the present Government, I have every hope the result of this debate will show that the House of Commons have come. To those limits, and to that position, I have no doubt whatever, the people of England have already come.

Lord John Russell: Mr. Speaker,—I could have wished to have addressed the House at an earlier period of this debate, soon after the temperate speech of the right hon. Baronet who introduced the motion, but I considered it my duty to wait until I heard the various arguments and allegations which could be urged in its support, and until I heard the charges which might be preferred against the Government. Admitting, as I freely do, the great ability and eloquence with which the motion has been supported—admitting the great numbers who are likely, on a division, to give their assent to it; yet, I may say, that a motion less consonant with the spirit of the constitution, or less founded on real matter, I never knew submitted to the House of Commons. The noble Lord who last addressed the House, in one phrase of his speech, said, that the time

had come when the House must get rid of an Administration which had so long crippled the energies of the country. Now, that is a fit charge to bring against the Government. If that charge had been formally preferred by a motion, and if it could have been supported by arguments and evidence, I am the last person to deny that the confidence of the House ought to be withdrawn from us, and that no prerogative of the Crown, no personal favour of the Sovereign, ought to protect us from a declaration of want of confidence on the part of this House. But where is the evidence that the energies of the country are crippled? Is it in the Mediterranean? Have we been wanting in the due support of our ancient ally, the Sovereign of the Turkish Empire? Is it in India? When her Majesty's representative was insulted and outraged in the territories of the Emperor of China, did it appear to the world that, in the steps we took in reference to that matter, the energies of the country were crippled? Has there been any indication that the energies of the country were crippled, when we have been called upon to assert the national policy or avenge a national insult? Then, with respect to our Colonial possessions, I confidently ask, have the energies of the country been crippled? Have not the Government effectually subdued insurrection in Canada; and is not that colony now increased in strength and more firmly attached to the mother country than before? Is it at home that the energies of the Government have been crippled? Have insurrection and insubordination gained head in this country; or has it appeared that the powers of the law have been intrusted to hands unequal to the task of maintaining the peace of the country? With respect to Ireland, so long the source of complaint and discussion in this House—a country whose people all parties had long desired might, by some method, be conciliated to the support of the Crown and Government of the empire—is it in Ireland, I repeat, that we have proved that we are unable to procure the affections, and have lost to the Crown the support, of a generous people? What right, then, I ask, has the noble Lord to charge the Government with crippling the energies of the country, when, during the whole of this debate, neither he, nor any other Member of the numerous and able opposition I see arrayed on the benches before



me, has been able to adduce a single proof in support of that charge! I trust it will be unnecessary for me, after the convincing reply made by my right hon. Friends, the President of the Board of Control, and the Secretary at War, on the first night of the debate, to the constitutional argument of the right hon. Member for Tamworth, to dwell long upon that topic. The general proposition of the right hon. Baronet is, that a Government which does not possess the confidence of the House of Commons, in a sufficient degree to enable them to carry their measures, ought not to remain in office; and that their continuance in office, under such circumstances, is contrary to the spirit of the constitution. The right hon. Baronet referred to several acts and proceedings of this House, which, in his opinion, prove that the present Government is in the situation pointed at by the resolution. With respect to the precedents which the right hon. Baronet brought forward in order to sustain his general proposition, I think there was hardly one which bore out what it was intended to support; because it does happen, that, in hardly one of those instances, was confidence withdrawn, because the Ministers of the day were unable to carry through the House of Commons the legislative measures which they considered necessary. My right hon. Friend, on the first night of the debate, quoted the cases of Lord Sunderland's Administration, who were defeated on the Peerage Bill, in 1717—of Sir R. Walpole, who abandoned the Excise Bill after he had introduced it—of Mr. Pitt, who was defeated on his Fortification Resolutions—and of Lord Liverpool who was defeated on the Property Tax—to show that it has not been the practice for a Government to resign because it was unable to carry all its measures, even when those which were rejected by the House of Commons happen to be of a most important character. But then the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, referred triumphantly to the case of Lord North. What was that case? It was Lord North's administration of affairs that was condemned by the House of Commons—it was the manner in which he employed the power and resources of the country, in a war against the revolted colonies, as they were called at the time, of North America. The House of Commons came to a resolution, that, after having lost thirteen colonies, and after an im-

mense expenditure of blood and treasure, offensive operations ought no longer to be continued on the continent of North America. And then the House of Commons passed another resolution, declaring that any one would be an enemy to his Sovereign and his country, who should advise his Majesty longer to prosecute the war in North America. Was that, then, a question respecting a legislative measure?—was it, for instance, such a question as fixing the duration of the Poor Law Commission for ten or five years? No; it was a question affecting the whole administration of affairs. It was a question respecting the waste of the resources of the country, which resulted in the discomfiture of the King's forces, and the loss of thirteen colonies, now forming the United States of America. I think it must be confessed that the case of Lord North, at least, rests on entirely different ground from that of the existing Administration, and is altogether inapplicable as a precedent. The right hon. Baronet must be aware that there was one case in which a contest was maintained by a Minister against a majority of the House of Commons; and that, although in fourteen different instances, extending over a considerable period of time, the House showed by its votes that it considered that Minister unworthy of its confidence, he still continued at the head of the Government. That Minister was Mr. Pitt. Let us see how that precedent applies. Now, with respect to the general principle involved in the right hon. Baronet's resolution, namely, that the Minister of the Crown ought to possess the confidence of the House of Commons, I at once assent to it; and I do not think—although the contrary has been alleged—that my right hon. Friend attempted to impugn it. I admit at once, that if the House of Commons, for any reason, continues to refuse its confidence to the Ministers of the Crown, it is impossible for them to continue in office. That is the general principle, in which I concur, with one alternative, however, with respect to which I shall presently address a few words to the House. The right hon. Baronet said, that the case of Mr. Pitt, in 1784, was peculiar, because Mr. Fox had complained of the manner in which that Minister was brought into office, alleging, that he owed his appointment to secret influence, by whose agency the previous administration had been

overthrown. I am willing to admit, that, as far as it goes, that is a perfectly fair statement of the case; but then it does not go far enough. It must be recollected, that there was another question in dispute between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox; and that was, the question of the India Bill, which Mr. Fox affirmed to be framed in perfect accordance with the principles of the constitution; whilst Mr. Pitt, on the other hand, characterised it as an attempt to create a fourth estate in the realm, and declared that it would be utterly destructive of the constitution. Did it at all depend even on that question whether Mr. Pitt should remain in office or not? Far from it. Mr. Pitt introduced his India Bill, and, when he proposed to go into committee upon it, was defeated by a majority of the House. And yet, although it had been affirmed in debate, that the bill was of the greatest importance—and, indeed, it was the sole measure of Mr. Pitt's Administration—that Minister did not consider its rejection by the House of Commons a sufficient ground for resigning office. Did Mr. Fox reprobate this course of proceeding? Did he say, that a Minister who was unable to carry measures he considered essential, ought no longer to remain in office? Did he maintain the doctrine which the right hon. Baronet has embodied in his resolution? No; Mr. Fox said:—

“I readily agree with the hon. Member who asserted that the failure of any bill proposed by a Minister afforded no cause for that Minister's dismissal from office—this is a sound doctrine.”

Thus, Mr. Fox, so far from affirming the doctrine laid down in the right hon. Baronet's resolution, affirmed directly the contrary. Mr. Pitt remained in office after having lost this bill; and Mr. Fox concurred with him in opinion, that the loss of the bill was no real ground for resignation. On that occasion we see Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox concurring in their reading of the constitution; and now we see a vice-president of the Pitt Club, moving a resolution, which is supported by a right hon. Baronet who professes a great veneration for the principles of Mr. Fox—which involves a doctrine opposed to that which Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox conjointly maintained. But the hon. and learned Member for Exeter said, I think, that the cases of the defeat of Mr. Pitt on the Fortification Bill, and of Lord Liverpool on the Pro-

perty Tax, furnished no ground for the resignation of those Ministers, although they did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons sufficiently to carry their measures, because there evidently was not, at the time, a Ministry capable of being formed to succeed them. But the present resolution says nothing of that kind. It merely declares, that the continuance of Ministers in office, under the circumstances stated, is at variance with the spirit of the constitution. The resolution ought to have contained a saving clause, like that introduced into the resolution proposed by the noble Member for Liverpool relative to the Sugar Duties, and which was comprised in qualifying words in this sense; “especially when a sufficient amount of sugar is likely to be imported.” The resolution before the House ought, in fact, to run thus: “that the continuance of Ministers in office under such circumstances, especially when there are other hon. Gentlemen perfectly able and perfectly willing to take their places, &c.” Perhaps, the right hon. Baronet may find it necessary to amend his resolution, in order to bring it into agreement with the admission of the hon. and learned Member for Exeter, and with the course of Parliamentary precedent. The observations which I have made have reference to the general tenour of the resolution as a constitutional precedent, and to the merits of that resolution, as professions to be founded on the spirit of the constitution; and it certainly appears to me, that after the arguments advanced by my right hon. Friends, and what I have now stated, nothing can be more clear, than that, so far from being in accordance with the spirit of the constitution, the present resolution would form an entirely new precedent, which, as I will proceed to show, it would neither be fit for this House to adopt, nor for any future Ministers, who had at heart the welfare of their country, to follow. Let us consider what has been the course of the constitution of late years; for I suppose, that there is no one who will not admit, that, with a change of circumstances, and with a difference in the position of the country, a different course of administration becomes necessary; and that, although the general spirit of the constitution remains the same, yet the mode in which it is to be acted upon must vary from time to time.

If the House will consider what has been the course of the constitution for the last century, I think they will see, that that which is required from Ministers, at the present time, is very different from that which was required formerly; and that the task imposed upon Ministers formerly, was much less difficult than that which they have now to undergo. If the House will refer to what has passed in the course of the present debates, they will perceive, that as I have already observed, the general course of our Administration is not the point in dispute. We are not charged with having crippled the resources of the country, by involving it in unnecessary and expensive wars, or by having exposed it to tumults and insurrections, which we had not the power to quell. No; the charge against us is, that we have submitted certain measures for the approbation of Parliament, which we have wanted sufficient power to carry, in the shape of bills, through this House. Now, if we look back to the greatest statesmen which the country has ever produced—to those whose names are most regarded for the genius and ability which they displayed in the direction of affairs—if we look back to Sir R. Walpole, to Lord Chatham, to Mr. Pitt, and to Mr. Fox—if we refer to the administrations of those great men, and then cast our eyes on the statute book, for the purpose of seeing what laws they have placed there, and what were the legislative measures they recommended and carried through Parliament, I fear we shall meet with but a meagre return, indeed, for our labour. It is not, that those Ministers did not answer all that was required of them in their time—it is not that they were not fully equal to the conduct of affairs, according to the principles they professed—but that the usages of the constitution did not then require, that those at the head of the Government should bring forward legislative measures; and, indeed, for the greater part of the last century, did not even require them to take a uniform and consistent part, either in supporting or opposing measures submitted to Parliament. In latter times, however, and more especially since the passing of the Reform Bill, the country and the constitution have required a different course of conduct on the part of Ministers. What with the necessity for legislation—what with the difficulty which individual Members experience in carrying

through bills—what with the great changes so long delayed, and which, after the passing of the Reform Bill, it was indispensable to make suddenly, and on various subjects—from all these different causes an expectation has arisen, that the Government should bring forward measures on subjects which excite public attention, and do their best to carry them through the House. But, when this is the case, I think it is unreasonable to expect, that a Government should possess the same general and uniform support, on the part of the House of Commons, which was required when Ministries had merely acts of administration to perform. With respect to acts of administration, when a Minister, in possession of all necessary information, states his views to the House of Commons, the House is prepared, either to give him its confidence, in support of his general policy, or to signify, by tokens which cannot be mistaken, that its confidence is withdrawn. But, with respect to measures of legislation, such as the Tithe Bill, the alteration in the criminal law, or the Poor-law bill, and all measures of a similar kind, each Member of the House is in possession of all necessary information; and, though Members may be disposed to yield a certain degree of deference to a Government, it can hardly be expected that they should place such unlimited confidence in them as to approve of every measure in detail which they introduce into Parliament. Therefore, if, on the one hand, new duties have been imposed on Ministers, and you require them to carry through Parliament measures, which they deem of essential importance; so, on the other hand, you must make a fair allowance for the effect of discussion, and the expression of the deliberate opinions, first, of Members of this House; and, secondly, of our constituents, which will inevitably occasion the alteration of some measures, and the rejection of others. Am I making an apology for the present administration only, or, stating what does not apply to previous administrations? As the right hon. Baronet has founded his motion entirely upon the failure of some of our measures, and on the carrying of others by the support of our opponents, I must take the liberty of referring to the only measures I know of during the time the hon. Baronet formed part of the Duke of Wellington's Administration; and, as

the right hon. Member for Pembroke has alluded to our legislative efforts, in what certainly appeared to me to be a tone of unusual bitterness, I must also take leave to advert to defeats sustained during the time when the right hon. Gentleman and I were both Members of the same administration, which, whatever else may be said of it, did not want a considerable majority in the House of Commons during the greater part of its career; I allude to the administration of which Earl Grey was the head, and Lord Althorp the leader in this House. First, with respect to the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. I brought forward, in 1828 a motion for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. The right hon. Baronet met that motion by a direct negative; but it was carried by a majority of forty. Did the right hon. Baronet say, "I have been defeated; it is clear that I have lost the confidence of the House, and must no longer continue in office." Far from it. He said, "I will contribute, in the best way I can, to carry into effect the motion I formerly opposed." The right hon. Baronet's discomfiture did not stop there. The next time the question came before the House, the right hon. Baronet proposed, that, instead of repealing the Corporation and Test Acts, they should be merely suspended. I thought, that those acts were founded in bigotry and intolerance. I looked upon them as relics of the days of religious persecution; and such being my opinions, I said that they must be totally repealed. Upon that point the right hon. Baronet did not venture to divide the House. He left the House in possession of an hon. Member of the Opposition, as I then was; and, when the vote was carried against his wishes, all that he said was, that he had been at the time absent from the House, taking refreshment up stairs. But that was a strong administration! It was not the weak, imbecile, and incompetent administration which has governed the country for the last few years. In the next year, another important measure was brought forward; and what was it? It so happened that, in 1827, the right hon. Baronet had spoken on the question of the relief proposed to be given to Roman Catholics, and stated that, in his opinion, it was not a measure which could be made a matter of doubt or compromise, because it would be incompatible with the main-

tenance of the constitution, and the welfare and security of the Church. Could stronger objections be urged against any measure? And yet, in 1829, the right hon. Baronet brought forward that very measure, which, at the time, he stated most fairly and candidly to be the measure of his opponents, and not his own! The only reason assigned for passing the measure at that particular time, which had not existed before, was, that large bodies of men were congregated in Ireland, who, by threats and menaces, forced the administration, of which the Duke of Wellington was the head, to adopt a measure which they had themselves declared to be incompatible with the security of the Church and the maintenance of the constitution. And this was your strong Government! This was the Government which could carry through its measures. Why, that measure was opposed by one half of the usual supporters of the Government. It was opposed in a manner the most violent and acrimonious, and was carried only in consequence of the constant attendance and active support given to the Government by the Opposition of that day. And yet the noble Lord, who has just sat down, analysed the divisions of this House, and told us that our continuance in office was incompatible with the spirit of the constitution, because, upon questions of far less importance than that of 1829, we have received the support of our political opponents. The Duke of Wellington's Administration was succeeded by that of Earl Grey. One of the first things that occurred in Lord Grey's Administration was a defeat, by a majority of forty-six, upon a proposition relative to the timber duties. Besides this defeat, many parts of their budget, being opposed, were withdrawn. In the next Parliament the Administration had an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons. I think that the party who now bring forward and support the present resolution, at that time mustered not more than from 120 to 140; and yet, in that House of Commons, the Ministers were subjected to more than one defeat, and I may particularly refer to that upon the malt duty. After being defeated upon that question, Ministers came down to the House, and asked it to rescind the resolution which it had come to; and the right hon. Baronet most fairly and handsomely came down, and gave his support to the Government

upon that occasion. He supported, with the greatest ability, the motion for rescinding the resolution for the repeal of the malt duty. Was the right hon. Member for Pembroke shocked at that? Was the noble Lord? Did they then say, that such an act of generosity, on the part of the Opposition, was never before heard of? I do not remember any thing of that kind to have occurred. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, and myself, were parties to another proceeding, upon which we were opposed by a great many of our usual supporters, and supported by our opponents. I allude to the Church Temporalities Bill. In bringing forward that measure, the noble Lord stated, I think on just grounds, that the funds to be derived from the improvement of church leases would be the property, not of the Church, but of the State. It was found, that that bill, which had met with considerable opposition in the House of Commons, was not likely to pass through the other House of Parliament, if it contained the important provision to which I have just alluded, and therefore the noble Lord abandoned the clause in order to carry the bill; thus making an important concession to his opponents. Now, I maintain that there was no loss of dignity; there was no sacrifice of honour, in that proceeding. Because, with our mixed constitution, especially with a Reformed House of Commons, and a House of Lords, constituted as it is at the present moment, we must be prepared to make such concession and compromises as these, if any measures are to be carried, which conduce to the benefit of the public at large. My opinion is, at least, that any Government which is not prepared sometimes to listen to the objections of their opponents, will deservedly lose the means of carrying some of their measures, and, with the power of carrying them, they would lose the confidence of the country. That principle was fully acted on when the right hon. Baronet opposite expressed his objection to another part of the same bill. For when he, though at the head of only a small minority, urged the Government to alter those provisions of the bill which affected the interests of existing incumbents, they felt so strongly the force of his arguments, that Lord Althorp requested time to consider them, and afterwards announced that he was prepared to abandon that portion of the measure. I

think I have shown that those compromises and concessions, to which so much importance has been attached during this debate, are not matters of such entire novelty as hon. Members opposite would have the House believe; and I must add, that, if you impose upon Government the necessity of introducing legislative measures, it is only by such means they can succeed in carrying them through Parliament. I remarked before, that, if we referred to the statute book for a record of the legislative labours of eminent statesmen of former times, we should find but little done in the way of abrogation of bad laws, and still less in the way of the introduction of good laws. But when we come to recent years, and look at what the successive administrations of Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne have effected, it is impossible not to be struck with the great changes which have taken place—some entirely of a legislative, and others of a mixed legislative and administrative character. The right hon. Baronet, in addressing the House the other night, told us, that he had been for ten years practically out of the administration of affairs, and that he must therefore take a review of our financial condition during that period. I confess that seemed to me to be a somewhat curious statement on the part of the right hon. Baronet, as if he had not been watching and attending to the progress of affairs whilst he has been out of office. But meeting the right hon. Baronet on his own ground, adopting his own position, and taking a review, not of the financial, but of the legislative measures of the Government, let the right hon. Gentleman observe what changes have taken place during his ten years' absence from office. When the right hon. Baronet quitted office, he left the power of returning Members to this House, in some 150 or 200 instances, entirely in the hands of individuals, who either returned themselves to Parliament, or bargained for the patronage and favour of Government, in consideration of returning their friends; or actually sold to some one, for a yearly pension, the power of sitting in the House. He left the great towns of this country—Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, and Sheffield, and most of the other great marts of manufactures, and some of commerce—totally unrepresented in the House of Commons. If the right hon. Baronet were now to return to office,

he would find no such power vested in individuals, as they formerly, by usurpation, had contrived to obtain. He would find that the great manufacturing and commercial towns of this country have representatives; and that some hundred thousand persons, who formerly did not possess the elective franchise, now form part of the base on which this House rests. When the right hon. Baronet quitted office, he left some 800,000 human beings, under the British dominion, who were considered as mere goods and chattels—who were treated with all the inhumanity to which brute beasts are sometimes exposed, and who were disposed of as mere property, and were liable to all the afflictions which attend upon compulsory labour. He would now find them converted into a population of freemen, in the enjoyment of property, and as well off, perhaps, as any labourers on the face of the earth. The right hon. Baronet, on quitting office, left such abuses existing in the administration of the Poor-laws, as threatened, in the first place, to swallow up the greater part of the landed property of the country; and, in the next place, were rapidly debasing the character of the labouring class of this country—one of the finest bodies of men that ever existed. He would find, too, on returning to office, that a law has been passed, which has had the effect, not only of saving landed property from confiscation, but of elevating the character of the labourers. The right hon. Baronet left municipal corporations, in many instances, self-elected, going on from generation to generation without being subject to any popular control, in consequence of which, their funds were frequently disposed of fraudulently; but, at all events, secretly, and without the superintendence necessary to secure correctness and honesty in local administrations. He will find that popular control has been introduced into those bodies, in order to secure the proper administration of the funds, and the good government of the towns in which they are established. The right hon. Baronet left tithes a source of constant irritation between clergymen and their parishioners—converting what ought to have been the relations of charity and benevolence into feelings of dissension and ill-will. He will find that that source of contention and strife has been dried up, and that, by removing it, that church, to which the noble Lord who has just spoken

says we have done so much injury, has been avowedly more strengthened than by any measure which the strongest administration ever passed. Do not tell me that part of that plan is due to the right hon. Baronet. The attempt to settle the question was first made by Lord Althorp; and if we had had the misfortune to do what Lord Althorp did, namely, introduce bills on the subject of the tithes, in many successive years, without carrying them, we should, no doubt, have had it referred to as part of our sins. But to return:—That which I consider the essential part of the Tithe Act, is the making commutation compulsory. That principle was introduced by the present Government; and in the course of a few years it will effectually remove all the old evils connected with tithes. In Ireland, the right hon. Baronet left the poor and infirm without legal provision for their relief. He will find that legal provision now established; and the foundation is thus laid of a great social and moral improvement in the condition of Ireland. The right hon. Baronet left a source of constant disputes between the Clergy and Dissenters, in consequence of the compulsory enforcement of the marriage ceremony according to the rites of the church, and the necessity of receiving baptism according to the same rites, in order to secure the registration of births. He will find that an act has been passed which has removed those grievances—those sources of angry feeling and dissatisfaction, by means which are at once simple and efficacious, and have given rise to complaint from no party. The right hon. Baronet left the corporations of Ireland the seats of exclusiveness and intolerance, to the injury of the great body of the people. He will find that, now, the right principle has been introduced, though it has not been acted upon, as I think it should be, in details, of making corporations in the great towns of Ireland subject to popular control. There is another subject, with respect to which I must solicit the attention of the House for a short time. The subject is one which has not excited much party discussion, but upon which a great change has taken place, in effecting which the present administration has borne its part. I allude to the amendment of the Criminal-law—and I speak not of mere formal amendments, but of such that affect the number of persons sentenced to death, and executed. I find,

from a return which I asked for the other day, that, from 1821 to 1825 inclusive, 5220 persons were sentenced to death, and 364 executed, being an average of seventy-five yearly. From 1826 to 1830, 6679 were sentenced to death, and 308 were executed, being an average of sixty-one yearly. From 1831 to 1835, 5059 were sentenced to death, and 210 executed, being an average of forty-two yearly. From 1836 to 1840, in the second year of which period those amendments of the criminal law were adopted which I had the honour of introducing, the number sentenced to death was only 1181, and the number executed only fifty-one, being an average of ten yearly. It appears, therefore, that in the first ten years, 683 persons suffered death; whereas, in the last ten, only 261 have been executed; and in the last five years, capital punishment has been inflicted in only fifty-one cases. This is a change which I look back to with satisfaction. Now, I beg the House to sum up the measures to which I have referred—the Reform Act, the Act for the Abolition of Slavery, the Poor-law Amendment Act, the Municipal Corporation Reform Act, the English Tithe Act, the Irish Poor-law Act, the Act for the Registration of Births and Deaths, the Irish Corporation Act, the Act for the Amendment of the Criminal Law, and, I may add, the Canada Union Act—and I ask whether, in any similar space of ten years, any Administration which has existed in this country ever introduced greater and more important measures, or I should rather say, effected greater and more important improvements? And yet it is upon our asserted failure in legislation—putting aside every consideration connected with our internal and external administration of affairs—putting aside every thing done by the executive, both at home, in the colonies, and abroad—the right hon. Baronet and his supporters found their charge against us. In return, I show you a part of what we have done, omitting to notice minor measures, which are not, however, unimportant, but with respect to which I abstain from troubling the House. I have shown the important legislative changes which have been introduced and carried by that Administration which has been so charged—I will say, so calumniated. Let it be recollected, that all these changes, beginning with the Reform Act,

have been effected without any of the direful evils of a revolution—that we have not seen, in this country, what has accompanied great changes, in former days, in this country, and almost in the present day in other countries—a civil war, and parties running to arms to contend against each other. On the contrary, although hon. Gentlemen opposite bring these charges against our management of the finances, the security of the public funds has gone on constantly increasing since the accession of Earl Grey to office. But I will not go so far back as that. I will take the year 1835, since it has been particularly dwelt upon by hon. Members opposite—the period at which the existing Administration was formed—and I ask, whether there has been any thing like serious disturbance in this country whilst the great changes which the Government has effected were in progress? Have not these changes been accomplished in the midst of peace? I have been, perhaps, too sensitive with regard to what are called organic changes. I feared that, after the great example of the Reform Act, an appetite might be created for other changes of the same kind, which might eventually endanger the most valuable and sacred institutions of the country. I am happy to say, however, that during the great changes and improvements which we have made—and I see near me my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-general, who has been a party to many improvements which I have not mentioned—the country has continued in the enjoyment of peace, and property has not been disturbed; but, on the contrary, the pursuits of industry have been followed in fully as much security as when a Tory Administration thought it their great glory to leave things alone, to allow laws to remain on the statute book which were the offspring of the most barbarous times, and to leave, in the executive administration, relics of the worst corruption. I have stated the general changes which the Government has made; and I certainly do not think it necessary, at this late period of the debate, to detain the House by going through all the measures which it is alleged the Government have been obliged to yield to their opponents; and therefore I will confine my observations to three or four of these cases only. With regard to the Appropriation Clause, we felt it our duty to introduce it into a



bill brought into this House, which we believed was likely to pass. It is undoubtedly true, that Parliament ultimately passed the measure without that clause embodying the principle which we considered necessary to the final and satisfactory settlement of the question. I maintain, however, that that does not furnish any proof that we did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons with respect to that measure; for the Appropriation Clause was supported by a majority of this House. We carried the bill through the House of Commons, and sent it, containing the clause, up to the other House. But, though it was carried to the bar of the House of Lords, the tide of public opinion was not sufficiently strong to bear it safely into the harbour of legislation. The House of Lords, it is well known, struck out the clause; and therefore, I say, that the abandonment of the Appropriation Clause is no proof of our not possessing the confidence of the House of Commons, although it may be considered evidence of our wanting that of the House of Lords. It was my opinion at that time, that, looking to the great changes which had recently taken place, and to the nicely balanced state of parties, it was most advisable, for the practical working of the constitution, to wait, in order that all parties might have an opportunity of observing whether public opinion was in favour of the further measures of reform which were then mooted, or whether it would become what it called more Conservative. If the voice of the country had been pronounced in favour of further reforms and liberal measures, I expected, that the House of Lords would, as they had before done, have yielded to the declared sense of the people. If, on the contrary, it should appear that the voice of the country was in favour of policy of a more Conservative character, we felt that it would be equally our duty not to press upon the attention of the other House of Parliament liberal measures with which we might even feel ourselves identified as an Administration. It did appear to us that the opinion of the country did not warmly support us in maintaining the Appropriation Clause, as we expected it would have done. But, since the right hon. Baronet has alluded tauntingly to the resolution in which we declared that no adjustment of the Tithe question could be final or satisfactory,

which did not involve the principle of appropriation, I must say that, although I feel myself bound to support the settlement which has been effected, I would advise hon. Members opposite not to be so absolutely certain that there may not arise in Ireland, some serious discontent as to the manner in which that question has been disposed of. This has been drawn from me by the allusions which have been made to the subject, and not with any intention of departing from the settlement which has been made. On the contrary, I shall, under all circumstances, give my support to the existing law, which has established a rent-charge in lieu of tithes. All I mean to say is, that when it is alleged that this settlement is perfectly satisfactory, I cannot help thinking that some doubt may be entertained upon that point. The next subject to which the right hon. Baronet alluded, was the bill respecting Jamaica. I cannot help saying, that the manner in which the right hon. Baronet treated this topic, was not altogether marked by that candour which I expected from him. When the Jamaica Bill was brought forward, the right hon. Baronet said, "I do not think the measure is justified by the circumstances of the case; but if circumstances should arise to render it necessary, I will support it, or some bill like it." The right hon. Baronet also said, he could not look upon the bill as a party measure, and he suggested that it should be postponed for a year, and another bill, wanting its stringent enactments, passed in the meantime. Now, after that, I confess I was surprised to hear the right hon. Baronet refer to what occurred respecting the Jamaica Bill, as a proof that we did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons. [Sir R. Peel: You refused to adopt my views on the subject.] It is true that we did look upon it in a different light from that in which the right hon. Baronet viewed it. That is perfectly true. But it is equally true, that the right hon. Baronet is not justified in treating the measure, at one moment, as a subject which does not form a party question, and with respect to which we might fairly adopt his suggestions; and, at another, treating it as a party question, and referring to our adopting his suggestions as a proof that we did not possess the confidence of the House of Commons. The Government resigned office at the decision which the House of



Commons came to with respect to the Jamaica Bill; but what was the opinion of the Duke of Wellington in reference to that proceeding? The noble Duke, who is not likely to be too favourably disposed towards us, or anxious for our continuance in office, declared, that we had acted prematurely in resigning. That opinion the noble Duke expressed both in public and private. Having resigned our offices, however, the right hon. Baronet was called upon to form an administration; but his attempt to do so failed, owing to circumstances to which I will not now refer. ["*Cheers*"] I assure hon. Gentlemen opposite, that I, personally, have no unwillingness to allude to those circumstances. But there are higher considerations which restrain me. The right hon. Baronet, it will be recollected, after the failure of his attempt to form an administration, stated in this House various reasons—independently of the circumstance to which I have just adverted—which induced him to think that he would have found it very difficult to carry on the Government. He said, that in the very division on the Jamaica Bill in which, be it recollected, we obtained a majority of five, ten Members had voted who were not usually found amongst his supporters. He commented, also, on the difficulties which he would have had to encounter in the Government of Ireland, and the inadequate support he would have received from the representatives of that country; and he particularly referred to the defeat which he anticipated in the coming election of Speaker. The right hon. Baronet's anticipations upon that subject proved to be correct. When the chair of this House became vacant, a Gentleman on the other side of the House was proposed to fill it, to whom no objection could possibly be taken on the score of character, or fitness for that elevated station. We, on this side of the House, as little doubted that right hon. Gentleman's fitness for the office of Speaker, as hon. Gentlemen opposite, I am sure, would think of questioning yours, Sir. The question was one in which the two great parties took an interest, because each wished to establish, in the person of the Speaker, the representative of its opinions. The result of the struggle was a majority of eighteen, in favour of the candidate proposed by us. Was not that, I ask, decisive evidence as to which side of the House commanded the majority? Was

it not a proof that we, at that time, possessed the confidence of the House? The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, has referred to our abandonment of the bill for amending the Poor-law Amendment Act, as another proof of our not possessing the confidence of the House. I think that the proper time for the right hon. Baronet to have criticised the bill, in the way in which he did, was when it was before the House. If the right hon. Baronet had at that time stated his objections to any parts of the measure, I would have been prepared to have given him an answer. But, instead of pursuing that obvious course, the right hon. Baronet waited until the bill was removed from the table of the House, and then took an opportunity of entering into a discussion on its merits, in the midst of an angry debate between two great parties. The right hon. Baronet accused the Government of not embodying in the bill some of the mitigating recommendations of a committee of this House, which sat to inquire into the subject of the Poor-law. Now, it so happens, that I had prepared clauses embodying several of the recommendations of that committee, and I only withdrew them, after mature consideration, because it was made apparent, that, by adopting them we should run a very great risk of bringing back some of the worst evils of the old law. For instance, it is quite right that an allowance in money should be given to a sick member of a working man's family; but if this was done by Act of Parliament, there is no knowing what construction might have been put upon it, or how far it would have led to the revival of the old abuses. After full consideration, therefore, we determined, and I think wisely, that it would be best for the country—that it would be best for the poor themselves—to leave all matters of this kind to the discretion of the Poor-law commissioners, instead of introducing positive enactments respecting them into an act of Parliament. I now come to the last instance which the right hon. Member for Tamworth referred to, in support of his proposition, that we do not possess the confidence of the House of Commons; and that is, the rejection of the Budget brought forward by my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The question involved in the Budget is, whether by a change in the differential duties—whether by removing abolition and di-

minishing restrictions—we cannot increase the revenue, supply the existing deficiency, and thus avoid the necessity of imposing fresh taxes. The right hon. Baronet said, that, if he were in office, he would take a calm review of all the circumstances connected with the state of our finances, before he determined on what he ought to do. Yet, whatever may be the right hon. Baronet's ability, I defy him to find any but four modes by which the revenue can be brought upon a par with the expenditure. The first is, by diminishing our naval and military establishments; but even the most sanguine could not expect to derive more than a million from this source; and I maintain that, in the present state of Europe, it would not be prudent—it would not be safe—to make any considerable reduction in these services. In the second place, a Government might go on from year to year, raising money by means of loans; but that would eventually only augment the deficiency, whilst, at the same time, it could not fail to operate injuriously to public credit. The third mode is, the imposition of fresh taxes. The remaining resource is to alter the protective duties. Now, I confess it does appear to me, that, as regards a question involving considerations of such magnitude as these we ought not, upon the first defeat, to have resigned office, and transferred power into the hands of our opponents. I will not deny that many reasons might be urged in favour of such a course; but, looking to the great interest of the people as affected by the measures which we have propounded to Parliament, it seemed to us that the reasons which existed for not tendering our resignation to our Sovereign were the stronger. If we had done so—if we had taken that course—would it not have been thought that we had brought forward these measures without the intention of standing by them, and that we had abandoned them on the first show of opposition? I say that, if we had acted in that manner, we would have seriously injured measures which we think beneficial to the public interest, and shaken and invalidated the great principles we desire to see carried into effect. As long as it is possible for us to persevere in propounding these measures, taking upon ourselves the responsibility of doing so as long as we see a prospect of carrying them, and thus rendering an essential benefit to the country—I think that we are bound to

continue at our post. The right hon. Member for Pembroke quoted the opinion of a great man, but without that authority which attaches to a real admirer of his principles, and follower of his conduct. I will also quote his words. On an occasion when the Whig party was in a state of discomfiture, and almost of despondency, Mr. Fox said, that if he could entertain any hope of advancing the great cause of civil and religious freedom, which he had ever espoused, he would not slacken in his exertions; and he quoted from Virgil, as expressive of his feelings, the lines—

“Non aded has exosa manus victoria fugit,  
Ut tanta quicquam pro spe tentare recusem.”

Espousing the principles of Mr. Fox, like him we will not desert the cause in which we have embarked; but will, on the contrary do all in our power to contribute to the success of the measures which we have brought under the consideration of the House, and the importance of which, I think, it is impossible to exaggerate. Having, then, determined, that it was our duty not to resign our offices upon the first defeat with respect to those measures, but one course remains open to us to pursue. The noble Lord who spoke last charges us with having referred to a dissolution by way of a threat. Why, at an early period of this debate, we were accused of not speaking out on that very subject. The noble Lord quoted a rebuke which Lord Lansdowne had administered to Mr. Canning when he uttered a threat of dissolving, but did we utter any threat on the subject? I say, we have neither uttered threat or menace. There have, to be sure, been threats and menaces uttered, but they have proceeded from the right hon. Member for Pembroke, and the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire. They have threatened my noble and hon. Friends, the Members for Lincolnshire, with the consequence of the votes which they are about to give upon this question. I trust that those threats will have no influence on the conduct of my noble and hon. Friends. I think my noble Friend, the Member for Lincolnshire, stands in far better grounds with respect to his constituents, than any one who would come forward and seek to supplant him by attaching himself to the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke. What is it my noble Friend has said, both in the county of Lincoln and in

this House? He said, "I oppose any alteration of the Corn-laws. It may be brought forward by the Ministers whom I support. My vote may cause a dissolution of the Ministry. I care not for that consequence. I give my vote on this question against them, because I feel that my vote on this subject is an adherence to the present law, which I prefer to any other." I believe the constituency of Lincolnshire may depend upon men who hold an attachment to the present principle of the Corn-law, without reference to any party tie. But on what ground are the hon. Gentlemen to stand, who are proposed to succeed my noble and hon. Friends? On the ground, not only that they are hostile to the present Government, but that they are ready to support the administration of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. And support him for what? Not on the great questions upon which the right hon. Baronet differs from us. But are they to support him by adhering to the present Corn-laws? By no means. But they are to support him on that wonderful and immutable principle of the sliding scale, which, as my hon. Friend, the Member for Lincolnshire, has truly said, may be no protection at all, or may be an entire prohibition. The hon. Member for Lambeth gathers from the right hon. Gentleman's speech, that he means to stand upon the principle of the present law. I confess I did not so understand him, because I cannot believe, that he would say so clearly, both last year and the present year, that he is not satisfied with the details of the present law, and, at the same time, mean to make only some trifling alteration in the sliding scale. I cannot think, that a great question of this kind could be brought forward by him for the sake of some very slight and trifling alteration. I believe, if he had the power, he would make a very great alteration. The hon. Member for Lambeth and I have read the oracle, and we read it differently. It is, to be sure, a very obscure and mysterious oracle, but I gather, from a statesman of the right hon. Baronet's prudence and long experience intimating that he was not satisfied with the present law, and would not adhere to its details, that he intends some day or other, if he has the power, to make a considerable alteration—always reserving, however, the sliding scale. How far that scale may slide may depend upon existing circumstances. But

what would the Lincolnshire farmers have to look to? My noble and hon. Friends may say—"This is an insufficient protection, we think our constituents ought not to accept it. We would not vote for it when it was proposed by our own friends, and we will not vote for it now that it is proposed by our opponents." But if two Members were returned upon the grounds of their attachment to the right hon. Baronet, they would say to such a proposition—"Never mind the Corn-laws, never mind establishing protection to agriculture, let the scale slide down as far as it may, it being proposed by the right hon. Gentleman who has our confidence, and the great object being to support him, we are sure it will answer its purpose, and secure the welfare of the agricultural interests." The great question that her Majesty's Ministers had to consider on this occasion—I will not deny it—was, between resignation and advising an appeal to the country. On a subject of so much importance to the people—considering that we have undertaken this question—I feel that it is our bounden duty to offer such advice to her Majesty as we may think will ensure the decision of it by the electors of the realm, duly consulted upon the question. I may be told, that this resolution is intended as a bar to the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown. I cannot see it, although, in terms, it may appear to be so. I do not mean to say, that a dissolution is a prerogative which this House has no right to interfere with. I think a dissolution, like other prerogatives of the Crown, is one in which the House has a right, in certain cases, to interfere. But I think the only ground upon which it can properly interfere is, when this House can say, that the course of legislation and administration is proceeding harmoniously, and that it is likely, both with respect to administration, and with respect to legislation, that if this House is not dissolved, many beneficial consequences to the country will ensue, and that a dissolution would be a needless and wanton interference with the course of business. Such was the ground taken by Mr. Fox in 1784, when an address to the Crown was moved against the dissolution of the Parliament of that day. He said, that the House was fully able to undertake, and would undertake, to settle the great question relating to India. Such was the ground that we took, when, in

1836, we moved and carried a vote of censure against the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Robert Peel), for the advice he gave to the Crown for the dissolution of that Parliament. But is that the course taken in the present case? I have listened to this debate, but I have neither heard from the right hon. Baronet, nor from any one who followed him, the assertion, that if no dissolution of the present Parliament took place, it was likely to continue for the whole six years during which Parliaments are allowed to last, with benefit to the country, or with improvement to its legislation. With regard to legislation, hon. Gentlemen opposite themselves have made out, that various decisions have been given by the House, some for, and some against Government. Then, with respect to the budget: it is a question of such importance, that it could hardly be brought to a final issue without appealing, at one time or other, to the sense of the people. But with regard to the administration, will not the division of this night tell us—which ever side may have the trifling majority, which is the utmost any one expects—will it not, I say, show, that there is that degree of party feeling in this House, that it is not likely, even if we had surrendered the reins of office to the right hon. Baronet, that he would have found himself able to continue the administration of the country with the present House of Commons? Had the right hon. Baronet felt otherwise—had he been of opinion otherwise, would he not have stated it? If the right hon. Baronet could have alleged, that, if he were in power, he could carry on the Government without a dissolution, would he not have alleged it? But has he done so? No. No doubt the right hon. Baronet thinks, as I think, and as almost every body out of doors thinks, that the symptoms of division in this House, are such that the present House of Parliament cannot be of long duration, without some appeal being made to the people, in order to decide which are the principles, and which are the men, in whom they place confidence. If such, then, is the case—if we cannot attain the useful result of averting a dissolution, and of continuing the present Parliament by our resignation of office, what effect would that resignation have in the eyes of the country, but the apparent abandonment of those principles we have supported—an imputation, which, by the way, Lord Melbourne has declared,

would be the last he would like to bear, and, perhaps, also, an impediment, for some years to come, to the passing of those measures of legislation which, we think, are calculated to secure the welfare of the country. Then, Sir, is not what I have said sufficient justification for the course that we are now pursuing? Is it not a sufficient justification for our not taking that course which the right hon. Baronet says was incumbent upon us, which, no doubt, in his view, he considers incumbent upon us; but which, I think, would not have done justice, either to our principles, or to the immediate measures which we have propounded. I now leave this question to the judgment of the House. With regard to the resolution proposed by the right hon. Baronet, as a resolution affecting the constitution—putting aside the merits or demerits of the present Administration, I think it is not rightly founded in precedent, and, above all, ill suited to the present condition and state of our constitution. As regards the Administration, I think, if it means that the present Ministers are not entitled to advise the Crown to dissolve the Parliament, it is an unjustifiable interference with the royal prerogative. If it is not so intended, then you have our confession, that we should not think it right, after the decision of the House upon the sugar question, to continue for any longer time to hold office with this Parliament, than is absolutely necessary, in order to pass those measures which are essential for the financial service of the present time, and for the purposes of assembling, as soon as public convenience would admit, a new Parliament, to decide upon the whole question at issue. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Pembroke, approves of the precedent of 1831; and yet he would condemn us for following that precedent; and that entirely upon the ground, that it did so happen that the sugar duties then expired in March, and therefore there was no obstacle to a dissolution; whereas they do not now expire till July, and therefore require to be continued. The noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire, stated at that time his opinion upon the subject. He said:—

“If, however, a set of Ministers, who brought forward a measure to which they were solemnly pledged, for the good of the country, found that that measure was defeated, it certainly might not be improper, in such a case,

that a reference should be made by them to the opinion of the public."

Such was the opinion of the noble Lord in March, 1831; and I know not why that opinion should be departed from in 1841. What makes the difference between the two periods? The noble Lord assents to that opinion; why, therefore, press this resolution upon the House. If we admit, that we ought not to continue in office with the present Parliament, where is the necessity, and where is the justification of the resolution. Upon the whole state of the case, and upon the whole case of the Administration, I beg the House to consider, that this is a resolution supported and made out by reference to various legislative measures,—the Ministry having brought forward more legislative measures, and having carried more legislative measures of useful reform than perhaps any other Ministry, with the exception of Lord Grey's Administration, from 1831 to 1835. With respect to the state of affairs, and with respect to the administration of the executive, I beg the House to consider, that during the whole of this debate, no delinquency has been proved, no weakness has been shown—no want of vigour demonstrated either at home or abroad. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, on one occasion, accused us of wishing to abandon the vessel of the state, when we found that we were no longer able to guide it. Now, I must say, that with regard to the present state of affairs—apart from the evil of the equal division of parties—I see nothing which should induce any Minister to desire to quit office, or any Gentleman to be unwilling to accept office. On the contrary, I think the state of affairs, at home and abroad, is such as to give great facilities to any Administration who may have to conduct the affairs of the country; and, if left by those who now hold the reins of Government, their successors would find the character of the country standing as high as it ever did among the nations of the world, with peace and security at home. Your only difficulty is from your unwillingness to deal with interests, which are opposed to measures useful for the future welfare of the country. If you can deal with those interests with just caution, giving them every consideration which is due to their long establishment, and taking upon yourselves the responsibility of reforming your present laws, and yet pro-

ceeding upon sound principles, and being determined to go on with the application of those sound principles,—then I say, that if you, the Parliament and the Government, do that, there is no difficulty whatever in the Administration of the country. But if you will not do that—if you will undertake to protect vicious legislation—to consider the interests of separate bodies, rather than the well-being of the whole—then, indeed, you may enter upon a protracted struggle, but it will be a protracted struggle against measures which are founded upon sound policy, and which are certain of ultimate triumph.

Sir Robert Peel: Mr. Speaker, A great portion of the speech of the noble Lord has been occupied by the information, kindly conveyed to me, as to the measures which I should discover to have passed, in case, after the lapse of ten years, I should be called to office. And I have not the least doubt, that, if there should be in the House at present, as there was some time since, some eminent stranger, to whom the speech of the noble Lord should be translated, and who may not be very conversant with the parliamentary history of this country, that eminent stranger would suppose that I was a person to whom it was necessary for the noble Lord to convey information as to the measures that have been passing during that period, that I have been excluded for ten years, from any parliamentary proceedings—and that I had taken no part whatever in those measures which the noble Lord was detailing. I can assure the noble Lord that his reminiscence was unnecessary. With many of those measures I have been fully conversant. I think I know something of the consolidation and improvement of the criminal law. It is true I did not appoint a well-paid commission, of five Gentlemen, sitting for years. I effected those improvements with no other aid than the ordinary official assistance; and after the testimonies which I have heard borne to the utility of those improvements from the Ministerial side of the House, I think it is hardly necessary for the noble Lord now to claim exclusive credit for them, and to remind me that such a thing had been effected, as an improvement in the criminal laws. Then, with respect to Dissenters' Marriages, why, during the short period that I was permitted to hold office, in 1836, one of the measures which I introduced was the measure for the removal of

grievances of which the dissenters complained, both in respect to marriage and to baptism; and, on my statement of that measure on the part of the Government, I well recollect that to the principle of it, and to the spirit in which it was conceived, ample testimony was borne by those who then occupied the opposition benches. With respect to the English Tithe Commutation bill, I think also I need not be reminded of it in this House. For, although it is true the noble Lord did superadd, after the lapse of three years, the compulsory commutation—and I admit it was an important improvement; I never contended it was not, nor when I brought that measure forward, did I say that I would exclude compulsory commutation;—yet, with that addition, the whole of my own measure was copied, and introduced by the noble Lord into his bill, and I did all that I could towards promoting its efficiency and perfecting it. Then again, with respect to the Irish Commutation Act, —all I know is, that after a lapse of three years, after much confusion, disorder, and bloodshed in Ireland,—for which I was not responsible—but after an intervening delay of three years, the self-same measure, which I had introduced in 1835, was tardily and reluctantly assented to by her Majesty's Government. The noble Lord says, "Don't feel too confident as to the permanency of that settlement." O! no, I feel no such confidence. I know that the noble Lord has the power to disturb it. God forbid that the pressure of political necessity should ever induce him to disturb it; but, I own, I shall feel much greater confidence in its permanence if I can have the assurance that no political necessity can occur, than I now feel that, if a necessity should occur, it will not be submitted to. With respect, likewise, to the Irish Poor-law Act,—why, do I not recollect the bitter, the envenomed opposition to that law, which the noble Lord met with from him who is the chief supporter of his Government? Do I not know, with respect to that measure, and with respect to half the measures which the noble Lord has thought it necessary to recal to my recollection, that, without my aid, the noble Lord could not have carried them? Next is the English Poor-law Bill. Does the noble Lord really think it necessary that he should inform me, as if I had been banished from this House, that a Poor-law

Bill has been under consideration? Then comes the Jamaica Bill. The noble Lord says, I have no right, whatever, to taunt the Government on the subject of Jamaica. I am not conscious that, in discussing the subject, I ever did taunt him. I said this, that the noble Lord had been compelled to adopt the suggestions I offered with respect to the Jamaica Bill. The noble Lord says, that the amendments I proposed were slight and unimportant, and that they involved no difference in principle, but that their adoption simply referred to time; and that, if the House of Assembly in Jamaica proved refractory, the time might come when he himself, might assent to those amendments. But, if those alterations were a slight and unimportant difference, why did the noble Lord, in consequence of their adoption, abandon the functions of Government? The noble Lord seeks refuge under the authority of the Duke of Wellington; but I think, without much bettering his case. In the course of this Session, the noble Lord was compelled to admit, that it was well that our counsels had prevailed; that our predictions had been verified; and that it had not been necessary to sacrifice popular Government in Jamaica, and thereby set an example for the forfeiture of popular Government in every other colony which had liberated negroes. The noble Lord, instead of disturbing the peace of society, throughout the West-India colonies, and shaking the security in representative Government, in consequence of differences which he now says were unimportant; but which were important enough, in his opinion, at one period, to justify the abdication of his trust—has been compelled to admit, that, by taking our advice, he has secured every object to which he could have looked, and has prevented that confusion and disturbance which would have followed an adherence to his own system. I recollect, then, not only the measures which have been passed, but I recollect also the dangers which have been averted, through our interference—dangers which without our assistance, the noble Lord had not the strength nor power to avert. What would have become of the question of the Ballot? What would have become of the New Reform Bill? Would the noble Lord, by the mere strength of his own hand, and without our help, have had the power to prevent, in the midst of the storm, "the raising of the anchors by

which the British monarchy was moored." What would have become of many of the prerogatives of the Crown, if it had not been for our intervention? Have I not seen the noble Lord abandoned, not only by those who are giving him their support to-night—they voting in direct opposition to him—but have I not seen him seated almost alone, when some of the most important prerogatives of the Crown have been under consideration,—with scarcely one of his official colleagues to assist him in the vindication of them? And, therefore, it is that I recollect, not only the measures which have been prevented by our opposition, which have been modified at our suggestion, and which, when good, have been carried exclusively by our aid; but I recollect, likewise, the important changes in the British constitution, which have been attempted—the revolution, once a year, which the noble Lord had to deprecate, which has been sought to be effected; I recollect all this, and I know that it has been by the aid of the Conservative party that the noble Lord has been able to avert them. The noble Lord has described his Government, as a Government successful abroad, possessed of the confidence of the Crown, and having its measures discussed by a House of Commons, the constitution of which was framed by the noble Lord himself. With all these glories, and all these advantages—according to the noble Lord's own statement—will he permit me to ask him, why it is that he does not possess more of the confidence of the House of Commons? The noble Lord has said, that all I promised was to take a calm review of certain matters. True, I did so; but I did not allude to those legislative and political measures which, night after night, I have been reviewing. But, among other differences which I should find, and have to review, when restored to power, one would be this, that whereas I, who, on quitting office, left a clear surplus of two millions of revenue—I, who belonged to an administration which, in three years, had reduced the public debt by twenty millions—I, who belonged to a Government that had reduced the interest of that debt by one million annually—should have to deal with a state of things which presents a deficit of nearly eight millions, under an administration of five years. True, I should find reforms, true, I should find a Poor-law; true, I should find the Jamaica

constitution—defective but for our recommendations; true, I should find that I had introduced into the preamble of a certain Canada Bill, an amendment, which the noble Lord told me, if adopted, would be fatal to the bill—nay, would be fatal to the Government; but that amendment was introduced, and notwithstanding its introduction, and notwithstanding the predictions of the noble Lord, the same Government has still preserved its vitality. Among all these discoveries which I should make, still my satisfaction, certainly, would be somewhat abated, on perceiving, notwithstanding all this success, that such is the melancholy state of our finances, that there has occurred, within five or six years, a deficiency of not less than 7,600,000*l.*;—and it was with reference to the means of supplying that deficiency and of determining upon what system the financial administration should be placed, that I declined to accede to your preposterous demand, that I should at once come forward and suggest what those means, and what that system should be. I stated, that I would promise nothing but a careful consideration of the causes which had led to this deficiency, and of the measures by which that deficiency might be supplied. That was the calm review which I promised; and it is not too much for men who have all control over every public department, who have the means of collecting efficient information from able public servants, in every department of the revenue, whom they may call to their assistance;—is it not rather too much, that they, who have been the immediate cause of involving the country in that deficiency, should tell me that, without such official aid, it is my duty to suggest the means of supplying it. I come now to the constitutional objections which have been made to the resolution which I have proposed; and I must say, that it has been impossible to discover any objections, on constitutional grounds, to the proposal involved in that resolution, without abandoning every principle for which the Whigs have hitherto contended. I begin with the objections urged by the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary to War. That right hon. Gentleman says, that my resolution involves a mere abstract dogma—that it is a mere declaration of constitutional law. Does the right hon. Gentleman really believe that any man will construe that resolution without

references to the circumstances on which it bears? Does the right hon. Gentleman mean that I am really proposing a resolution to this effect,—“that any Minister, who is in a minority upon an important legislative measure, ought to resign?” Is that the resolution I am proposing? Do I contend for that principle? Do I say, that any Minister, on the first formation of his Government, and who is obstructed by a powerful opposition, is bound to resign after the first defeat he encounters? Of course I do not, or I should condemn myself for the example I set in 1835. Do I, again, say that it is the duty of a Minister, having proposed certain financial measures, and having met with obstruction, at once to resign office, and abandon the reins of power? No such thing. I lay down no such principle; and I trust no Government will ever consider itself bound by it. I do not hesitate to say, that you might taunt me as long as you please with this resolution, but I should not feel myself bound to resign upon any single defeat. Of course not. I construe that resolution with reference to the circumstances in which the Ministers are placed. If the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues are dissatisfied with respect to their own confessions and declarations of their inability to carry on the Government, why, I ask, did they resign on the Jamaica question? The noble Lord now says, that it is a monstrous doctrine, that a Ministry ought to resign on the failure of legislative measures proposed by themselves; and he has gone through a long series of precedents, showing how Ministers had retained office in defiance of the Legislature. Sir Robert Walpole, the noble Lord says, was defeated upon the Excise scheme;—Mr. Pitt was defeated upon the question of the Fortification of Portsmouth and Plymouth; and Lord Liverpool was defeated on the Property Tax;—and yet none of these Ministers resigned. No doubt all this is perfectly true. But do I affirm it was their duty to resign? No. The propriety of resignation depends upon a combination of circumstances. But I ask the noble Lord, of what avail are his precedents, with reference to himself? He cannot deny that there may be circumstances in which it may be proper for a Ministry to resign, on being defeated on their own legislative acts. [Lord John Russell: Hear, hear!] The noble Lord recollects the

Jamaica case now. For there was a case where the Government was not defeated—where the Government had a majority of five, and yet they considered their victory so indicative of the want of confidence on the part of the House of Commons, that they resigned. I ask, then, is this a fair proceeding, that the Government shall have the power of selecting any legislative measure, on the rejection of which it may resign and abdicate its functions; but that the House of Commons shall have no power of deciding, under other circumstances, what shall be the duty of that Government in respect to resignation? Is it fair, that the Government shall take the particular measure on which it may be convenient for them to resign; but that the right shall be denied to the House of Commons of determining whether the rejection of other measures constitutes a case on which the resignation of the Government ought to take place? Why, Sir, the very admissions of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, are sufficient to justify the House in demanding a resignation. Did I not hear that right hon. Gentleman say, not only that the Government had not the power to carry the alteration of the Corn-laws, but that they proposed that measure without the expectation of carrying it? Has the right hon. Gentleman a right to say, that I confine the Government to a single case—to the Irish Bill, or to the Sugar Duties Bill—when he himself has told us, that he did not expect success when it was proposed to agitate the House and the country upon the subject of the Corn-laws? Again, did he not say, that his Government had been subjected, by parliamentary defeats, to a series of humiliations, to which nothing could reconcile them but an overwhelming sense of public duty? What did the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, tell me two years since? After summoning up all his energies, that noble Lord made the frightful announcement that the Government had at length determined to exist no longer on sufferance. Yes, the noble Lord, stung by a sense of that humiliation to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred, two years ago, told us, that their situation was intolerable, and that the Government had at last determined that they would exist no longer upon sufferance—but you have had some humiliation since [Cheers.]—and you



"Still have borne it with a patient shrug;  
For sufferance is the badge of all your  
tribe."

Therefore, don't tell me that this resolution has reference to a single defeat—that it is to constitute a rule to future Governments—that you are to suppose the politicians of future times will take the dry bones of this resolution, and say, "Here is a precedent which is to govern posterity!" No: they will look at your long series of defeats—at your inability to carry the measures which you have proposed—at your own admission that your situation is become intolerable; and the construction which they will put upon the resolution will bear reference to your own measures, your own acts, and your own confessions. The noble Lord (Lord John Russell) has argued, at the close of this debate, as if the Government has the confidence of the House of Commons. Yet almost all his colleagues who have preceded him have admitted that, at length the time was come when the want of confidence was sufficiently manifest, and that it was impossible that they could retain power with the existing House of Commons. All his colleagues who preceded the noble Lord have admitted that. They admitted that the Government had but two alternatives—resignation, or the dissolution of Parliament. Now, under what circumstances did I give notice of this resolution—this unconstitutional resolution—the facts contained in which, and the inference drawn from those facts, being both denied?—although, notwithstanding that denial, I have got this important admission, that, after the defeat upon the Sugar Duties, following other defeats, the Government are at length placed in a situation in which they have no alternative but resignation, or dissolution. I have that admission from the whole of them. After this, all your doctrine about retaining office, notwithstanding legislative defeats, is at an end. And, Sir, in passing, I must refer to that doctrine. The doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War, is this,—that it is the duty of the Government to administer certain executive functions; and that that Government may submit to legislative defeats, may survive those defeats, and be indifferent to them. So unconstitutional, so dangerous a doctrine I never heard maintained. A doctrine so discouraging to public men, so fatal to

the energies of a Government, I never before heard advanced; and it rather convinces me that the resolution I have proposed is not quite so unconstitutional, is not quite so open to objection, as hon. Gentlemen opposite assert it to be, when I find that high and learned authorities are obliged to resort to such unconstitutional grounds for the purpose of opposing it. Why, can any man survey the course of Government in this country, and not see that acts of legislation are so interwoven with acts of administration as to render it utterly impossible to draw a line of distinction between them? Nay, I go further and say, that the character of an administration, that their claim upon public confidence, is infinitely stronger on account of their legislative measures, than on account of their administrative acts. If mere departmental administration, not liable to question, is a sufficient ground for a Government to retain office, and to be regardless of legislative defeats, it is pretty clear that there need be no union or concert among Ministers. I dare say, in ordinary times, when questions of peace or war are not in agitation, it may be tolerably easy to fill the departments of office with honest, respectable, and sufficiently competent men, who, each in his department, would be able to conduct the duties devolving on him, in such a manner as not to be much liable to question by the House of Commons. And no matter what opinions such men may entertain upon the legislative policy of the country. They may either avoid legislation altogether, or take the safer course—propose measures, and being defeated, fall back upon their acts of administration. But I say, survey the course of the legislative and executive administration of this country, and look at the great measures which the Government have had to consider of late years, and see whether the character and vigour of a Government do not depend upon its legislative more than upon its executive administration. Take the measures which the noble Lord has referred to, with so much pride and satisfaction. Take the removal of the Roman Catholic disabilities, as affecting Ireland. Take the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, as affecting this country. Take the Reform of Parliament—take the Poor-law Bill—take the Municipal Bill—take the proposition for the repeal or alteration of the Corn-laws;—are not these the great

questions by which the character of administrations has been judged and determined? And is it possible to contend, in a reformed Parliament, with these great measures in our view, that a Government can be safely indifferent to the success or failure of its legislative acts? See what the inevitable consequence would be, if such a doctrine were to prevail. See what an inducement would be given, both to the Crown, and to the House of Commons, to depart from the sphere of their proper respective functions. The Crown would, or might, be constantly attempting to place the House of Commons in the wrong, by proposing popular legislative measures, and throwing upon the House of Commons the odium of rejecting them. The Crown might constantly labour to place the House of Commons in opposition to the constituent body, and to lower the character of the House of Commons, by inducing it to reject popular measures, purposely proposed with that view. If the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman were to prevail, all that the Crown would have to do, in order to stop the useful functions of the House of Commons, would be to say—"Legislative measures are matters of indifference; the Government I have chosen shall remain in office in spite of the rejection of the measures they have proposed; and we, the Crown and the Government, shall have credit with the country for propounding popular measures which you, the House of Commons, have rejected." Such would be the effect as regarded the Crown. Then see what an inducement you would give to the House of Commons to step beyond its functions, and thwart the executive. If the Government say,—“We are independent of the legislative measures and decisions of this House; that which is your peculiar function we will disregard; our fate shall not depend upon your decisions; nothing but your interference with our executive administration shall influence our retention of power;”—what an inducement do you not hold out to the House of Commons to interfere with the prerogatives of the Crown! The House of Commons, then, knowing that the only way in which it could influence the fate of the Government was by interfering with its administrative functions, would press for the production of despatches, the production of which, possibly, may be injurious to the public service, or would protest against appoint-

ments made by the Crown! In short, knowing that, by the exercise of its ordinary legislative control, it could not affect the Government, the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman would present to the House of Commons, the greatest inducement to depart from its proper sphere, and to interfere with the most important functions of the executive. The hon. Member for Lambeth says, that history is to constitute no precedent for us now; that, in consequence of the passing of the Reform Bill, he is indifferent to all precedents of former times. I should have thought that an advocate of the Reform Bill would have contended, that the House of Commons, being now a more exact image of the popular mind, should exercise a greater influence over the Government than an unreformed Parliament had ever done. But for the hon. Gentleman to contend, that a Government may be independent of Parliament, and that Parliament is to exercise no influence because it is reformed, is a doctrine I never conceived would have been advanced by any man professing himself to be a Reformer. But these are the shifts to which you are driven. You seek some plausible objection to my resolution; and you are obliged to abandon every constitutional principle for which you have hitherto struggled, in order to show me that that resolution is at variance with the spirit of the constitution. The noble Lord affected to be surprised that the Vice-President of the Pitt Club, and a professed admirer of Mr. Fox, had come forward to advocate the motion before the House, because, as he asserted, both Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox repudiated the doctrine laid down in the resolution. I read some extracts the other night from a speech of Mr. Fox, and I showed that Mr. Fox recognised the principle, that the confidence of the House of Commons is necessary to enable a Minister of the Crown to carry on the Government of the country. [Lord John Russell: Nobody denied it.] But the noble Lord read an extract from a speech made by the same statesman, which he seemed to think countenanced another principle. Out of the same volume, nay, out of the same page, I will produce an authority from each of those great men, to show that my view of the question was, in their estimation, the correct one. Mr. Fox said, upon this subject, that

“He wished to conceal nothing. He had

a suspicion that Mr. Pitt had an opinion, that the Crown might appoint a Minister, and persist in supporting him, who had not the confidence of the House of Commons. He wished the suspicion might be ill-founded, but he dreaded it to be true."

Those were the words of Mr. Fox. Mr. Pitt's opinion was to this effect:—

"He would, however, admit, that the confidence of the House of Commons was necessary to an administration, and he would be the last man to oppose that doctrine."

These were the opinions of Mr. Pitt and of Mr. Fox upon this subject. If, then, I have, as I have, the admission of her Majesty's Ministers, that they have so far lost the confidence of the House of Commons, that they ought either to resign or to dissolve—if they thus admit the truth of my first proposition; on what ground I ask, do they object to the second proposition—namely, that a Ministry who have lost the confidence of the House of Commons ought not to continue in office? I have already inquired, on what ground it was that I gave notice of this resolution. These were the circumstances:—On Tuesday the 18th of May, the noble Lord was defeated by a majority of 36. The noble Lord then proposed an adjournment to Thursday, the 20th of May, in order that the Government might calmly review their position, and decide on the course they meant to pursue. The universal impression was, that her Majesty's Government intended to resign. The noble Lord has admitted that it was a subject of grave deliberation. My first proposition, then, cannot be so utterly remote from the truth. On Thursday, the 20th of May, the Chancellor of the Exchequer quietly moved, that the House should, on the Monday following, vote the existing sugar duties for the year. That was the whole of the information that was then conveyed to us. A question was afterwards put to the noble Lord, as to when it was that he intended to bring forward the Corn-laws. The answer of the noble Lord was, that he intended to bring forward his motion on that subject on Friday, the 4th of June. That being the answer given by the noble Lord on the 20th of May, what right had I to infer that the Government meditated a dissolution? From what circumstance could I suppose that her Majesty's Government—notwithstanding our having had the formal assurance of the noble Lord, the Secretary for Ireland, that a

state of sufferance was no longer to be borne—that they would no longer exist upon sufferance—from what circumstance could I infer, that her Majesty's Government did not intend to pursue the usual course, and conduct the business of Parliament to the end of the Session, in the ordinary way? Under circumstances so peculiar, I also took time to deliberate on the course I should pursue; and having no reason to suppose that the Government meditated an immediate dissolution; and at the same time thinking that it was a violation of the principle of the constitution—that it was not doing homage to the representative principle, after the long succession of defeats which they had experienced that her Majesty's Ministers should remain in office, and continue to conduct the ordinary business of the country, I determined to give the noble Lord every advantage which a direct, intelligible, and straightforward course could afford him, and, on the Monday, I gave notice, that, on the earliest opportunity, I should move a resolution, that her Majesty's Government had not the confidence of this House, and that their continuance in power was at variance with the spirit of the constitution. And it was then, and not till then, that the fact was elicited from the noble Lord, that it was in the contemplation of her Majesty's Ministers to dissolve the Parliament. Up to that period, not a word had fallen from the noble Lord, not only which pledged the Government to a dissolution, but which even indicated any intention on their part to dissolve. But after I had given my notice—about ten minutes after—the noble Lord got up, and said that her Majesty's Government did not intend going on with the Poor-law Bill in the present Session, on account of the temptation which it might offer to Members to make speeches intended for the hustings, and with a view to recommend themselves to their constituents, rather than for the purpose of influencing the deliberative judgment of Parliament. It thus appeared that the noble Lord preferred the alternative of a dissolution, which he admitted to be inevitable, if he should relinquish the other alternative—that of resignation. But it was then, for the first time, that the noble Lord gave any intimation of his intention to adopt that alternative. If, therefore, my motion, has done nothing else than thus to force her Majesty's

Government to determine which of the alternatives it would adopt, still it has done good, because, it has, at any rate, gained this admission from the Government,—that for them to retain the power of governing and conducting the affairs of this country, under the circumstances in which they are placed, without either resigning or dissolving, would be at variance with the spirit of the constitution. But does the mode of their dissolution reconcile me to the act? Not at all. I do say, that having made their election, it was the duty of Government—not, certainly, to dissolve without passing the annual sugar bill, and with respect to that no obstruction would have been offered to them—but having adopted the alternative of dissolution, and not of resignation, it was, I say, the duty of the Government to resort to a dissolution at the earliest possible moment. It is inconsistent with all usage, and inconsistent with the spirit of the constitution, that a Government should be enabled to select the measures which it thinks proper to submit to the consideration of a condemned Parliament,—that it should withdraw some, and submit others,—that it should tell the Parliament—"an immediate dissolution is in contemplation; but, before we dissolve, we will just bring forward those measures, the rejection of which we think most likely to damage the House of Commons in the eyes of their constituents;—we will propose popular votes, such for example, as that of advancing money for the construction of railways in Ireland;—we will bring forward particular measures, which, we are of opinion, may aid the party cause of our administration;—but, respecting every measure which we have hitherto described as essential to the welfare of the country,—measures, the principle of which, has been affirmed by large majorities in Parliament, but the further discussion of which may prejudice our cause at the hustings,—respecting these, we will exercise our own discretion as to whether they shall be brought forward or withheld." Now, although the hon. Member for Lambeth will, doubtless, utterly disregard the circumstance, yet I do affirm, that there is no precedent for any Government to adopt such a course as this. When Mr. Pitt got the Mutiny Bill, after some slight obstruction experienced from Mr. Fox, that moment he dissolved the Parliament. Lord Grey, I apprehend, took the earliest

opportunity of dissolving in 1831. But whether there be any precedent or not, I say it is unconstitutional, and contrary to Whig principles, to condemn a House of Commons, and then to exercise your own discretion, for party purposes, as to what measures you will bring forward, or what you will withhold. Nothing has surprised me more, than the desperate fidelity with which a Whig Ministry seem to cling to the opinions of Mr. Pitt, while the opinions of Mr. Fox upon the subject they utterly despair of, if not despise. But they have got the precedent of 1784, and they bring it forward on all occasions as a justification for the course they are pursuing. With all personal respect for them, I must say, that it does appear rather ludicrous to see them stretching forward with so much eagerness, in order to place their feet in the gigantic footsteps of Mr. Pitt. First, there is the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary at War; then, the right hon. Member, the President of the Board of Control; and, lastly, comes the noble Lord himself,—each trying to plant his shoes in the footsteps of Mr. Pitt. It is only under the refuge of the mantle of Mr. Pitt that they can seek safety. They seem to exclaim with *Tricardo* in the play—"Alas! the storm is coming, and I have no retreat except under his gabardine;" and it is under the gabardine of Mr. Pitt that they seek shelter. But the moment they depart from that gabardine—the moment they thrust their heads from beneath it, that moment they utter some unconstitutional doctrine,—such as declaring that there is a clear distinction between the administrative and legislative functions of a Government. I think I have shown that the two propositions contained in my resolution are true,—first, that the Government by their own admission, have not the confidence of the House of Commons, and secondly, that it is in conformity with all constitutional principle and precedent that a Ministry not having the confidence of the House of Commons should relinquish office. I admit, that if there be a clear intention forthwith to dissolve the Parliament, that may be a vindication of the Government, but that a dissolution ought to be immediate. The House of Commons has no other mode of marking its sense of the unconstitutional tenure of power, than by passing some such resolution as that which I have submitted to the House, and which I most

properly submitted to its decision, because I could not know, and did not know, the intentions of her Majesty's Government with respect to a dissolution. If any thing could more thoroughly convince me of the wrong position of her Majesty's Government, I must say, the humiliating position, on account of their tenure of power, in defiance of all constitutional principles—it is the appeals which have been made, throughout this debate, to an individual Member of Parliament, like myself. I will notice first, the unjust imputations that have been thrown upon me by some of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I must say, I was surprised at the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, the Vice-President of the Board of Trade. He said, that he claimed for himself the most perfect freedom of speech; and he also said, with truth, that in his parliamentary conflicts with me, he had maintained all due courtesy; but he contended, that that courtesy was perfectly consistent with the utmost latitude of speech, and with the freest criticism on the conduct of men, holding a public character. I perfectly admit all this. No one more readily admits the right of any man to criticise, in the strongest terms, the public conduct of any Member of Parliament, whether in an official or in a private capacity; and I believe it is perfectly in the power of any hon. Member to reconcile the exercise of that right with all the courtesy which ought to preside over the debates in an assembly of Gentlemen. I do not ask for courtesy from the right hon. Gentleman, but I do ask for justice. And I ask, whether the charge he has made against me is just? He said, he would review my proceedings as a Minister, and he charged me with having excited religious animosities in the election of 1835.

Mr. *Sheil*: No. I did not charge you with it. I said quite the contrary.

Sir *Robert Peel*: Why, then, when speaking of my acts, as a Minister—why with reference to my administration, did you dig out of this forgotten appendix to the report of the Orange Lodge Committee, a report of the proceedings of some Orange Lodge, if it were not for the purpose of having it presumed that I had encouraged the animosities and the feuds to which the orange lodges had given rise? The right hon. Gentleman read an extract from some grand Orange Lodge report, in which it was stated that there were, in the various parts

of Ireland, three thousand Orange Lodges. On looking at the report, I found it was dated the 12th of November, 1834, at which time I was at Geneva, on my way to England. Why did you make me responsible for those proceedings? Would it not have been more just and fair, to look, not at what the records of an Orange Lodge might state, but at what were the opinions I expressed, and what was the course I took, when the proposal was made to address the Crown respecting Orange Lodges? It was not fair, on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, to bring such a charge against me. I do not deserve it from persons of his religious faith, that such unjust imputations should be thrown upon me, for the purpose of creating an excitement in Ireland, and of propagating the belief, that it is my wish that that country should be governed through the influence of religious party feeling. Why, if, at that election of 1835, I had encouraged religious animosities, I suppose I should have incurred some obligations to Orangemen, and when, in 1836, a proposal was made to address the Crown to discourage Orange Lodges, and those who should belong to them, I presume, that that might have been the occasion—I being in opposition at the time, and therefore under no obligation to take any particular part—when I ought to have given my support to my friends on this side of the House, many of whom entertained strong opinions upon the Protestant side of the question. But what was the course I took on that occasion? The House will permit me to refer to the debates on that question—a reference which the right hon. Gentleman himself ought to have made, if he really wished to know what were my public declarations, and my sentiments on the subject, instead of referring to the acts of some individual Orange Lodge, for which it is impossible I could be responsible. In 1836, these were the opinions I delivered. I beg pardon for trespassing on the indulgence of the House, but it is necessary I should do so, for my own vindication; for did not the right hon. Gentleman refer to the appointment of Lord Roden, and was it not the whole intention of his speech to show, that, in 1835, I had a design to encourage Orange Lodge Associations, to promote party spirit, and foment religious animosities in Ireland? This, then, was the opinion which I delivered:—"I am deeply impressed with the conviction, that

it would tend to the welfare of Ireland to see the extinction of all secret associations." Let me observe, I was not in power at the time. I was expressing my own sincere opinion—an opinion upon which I acted—and I was risking some parliamentary disapprobation by expressing it. I went on to say, that however laudable might be their intentions; however sincere their professions of loyalty, I still thought that the existence of societies having secret signs, was a bad precedent for other organised bodies, and that, therefore, I wished not only to see the Orange Lodges suppressed, but the angry spirit which had so long distracted Ireland, extinguished; without which, there is very little to be gained by the mere suppression of external forms. I did everything I could for the purpose of procuring the abandonment of those Orange Societies. The right hon. Gentleman may think what he will, but I venture to say, that no man has given advice which has been more effectual. It was strictly attended to, and has been most honourably acted upon. Those to whom it was given, have strictly kept the promises which were then made. I thank them for it; but I think it rather hard, after the course which they and I have taken, that we should be now taunted with a desire to provoke religious animosity in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman, the Member for Lambeth, said; that he supposed I had brought forward this motion in consequence of finding a clamour against the Poor-law prevail; and another hon. Gentleman, the Member for Lincolnshire, asked me what my opinions were with respect to the Charter. He said that I had stated my opinions with respect to the Ballot, and with respect to the Franchise, but that I had not yet given my opinion with respect to the charter, and that that was one of the grounds on which the hon. Gentleman withheld his confidence from me. May I ask the hon. Gentleman, whether the doubt he would imply by that statement, is an honest doubt?—whether he considers that the course I took the other night, with respect to the release of political prisoners, was such as to justify him in supposing that I have done anything to court the Chartists? Whether, in fact, that is really one of the grounds on which he withholds his confidence from me? Whether, although I have declared my opinion upon the subjects of the Ballot and

Franchise, yet that he really entertains a doubt as to whether or no I have not some secret understanding with respect to the objects of the Charter? Then again, with respect to the course which I would pursue;—charges and conjectures, of the most inconsistent nature, have been indulged in by hon. Gentlemen on this point. At one time, your charge is, that I am clearly the advocate of all monopolies; that, when you inquire into my political life, you find such has been my opposition to all popular rights, such my resistance to every species of reform, that no man, looking at the course I have hitherto pursued, can entertain the slightest doubt as to the course which I must henceforth pursue, should I attain to power; and that, upon that ground, you withhold your confidence from me. At another time, the charge is, that I have withheld or concealed my opinions on every point; that I have reserved to myself such a latitude of action upon all subjects, political, commercial, and financial, that there is not one upon which I am not perfectly at liberty to act according to that course which I may conceive to be conducive to the advancement of my party interests. How is it possible for me to reconcile these contradictory charges? I believe, however, upon the whole, that my political principles are pretty well known. I think the course I have pursued is tolerably clear; and that those hon. Gentlemen who believe that I am not prepared for the purpose of acquiring popular favour, to introduce into the working of the British constitution so much of democracy as shall disturb the other elements of which it consists, place the proper construction on my sentiments. Then you say—tell us your details. I ask, whether a more absurd or preposterous demand could be made? Take the Corn-laws: I should like to know, who has stood forward more than I have done, in defence of the existing Corn-laws. I should like to know, whether any man, looking at these debates, can really have a doubt that my desire is to maintain a just and adequate protection to the agricultural interest? Have I not contended for this, while I admitted, and I always will admit, that there may be some details of the present law which require alteration. The fact is, you are so disappointed at the course I have taken, that—[*No, no!*] Yes, you are! You want me to pursue

the course which you are yourselves pursuing. You wish me to call a public meeting, and to move some resolution, to the effect, that no adjustment of this question can ever be satisfactorily arrived at, that no settlement can be effected, unless we pledge ourselves irrevocably to adhere to the present law in all its minutest particulars. If I had done this, would not the charge have been preferred, that for the purpose of obtaining a party triumph, I had tried to create a division between the agricultural and the commercial interests; and that, for the purpose of procuring agricultural support, and of getting the votes of the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Lincolnshire, and of his noble colleague, I had irrevocably pledged the House to the maintenance of everything in its present state. But the hon. Gentleman, the Member for Lincolnshire, has a new doctrine. He says, that I owe him some gratitude for his vote on the sugar duties. Gratitude! I owe the hon. Gentleman no gratitude for his vote. What! gratitude from one Member of the House to another, on account of a vote, upon a question involving the interests of large classes of the community! The hon. Member considers I am guilty of ingratitude, because I move a resolution of a want of confidence in her Majesty's Ministers, which has placed him in a difficult position with respect to his vote. The hon. Gentleman thinks, that this resolution is some trap, or rather some immense pit-fall, laid especially for him, that it has been moved for the purpose of involving him in some difficulty. I must say, that the hon. Gentleman somewhat overrates the authority and importance, that are attached to the vote he may give on this occasion. Let the hon. Gentleman take his own course. One would really suppose, that the hon. Gentleman, had lapped the milk of Whiggism from his earliest years. And then, when the hon. Gentleman made that touching appeal about Ireland, I could not help asking, what used to be his sentiments respecting that country? I rather believe, I lost the confidence of the hon. Gentleman, by proposing the bill for Roman Catholic Emancipation. I think, that when he was in Parliament, in the year 1820, he voted, as I did, against the repeal of Roman Catholic disabilities. The hon. Gentleman should have recollected this, before he asked me what would be

the opinion which I should have of him, if he were now to write himself down a "recreant Tory." And now, with respect to the Corn-law. As I said before, look at the course which I have hitherto uniformly pursued with respect to that important law. I cannot say, that the hon. Gentleman opposite has put any wrong construction upon my intention. I have always contended, that the two great interests of this country—the manufacturing and the agricultural—have a close and reciprocal relation and influence to and upon each other. It is impossible to say what must be the influence of such a town as Liverpool, upon the rents of the land in its neighbourhood; or what the effect of such a town as Manchester or Birmingham upon the interest and prosperity of the agriculturist residing in those districts. It is still more impossible to close one's eyes, and not to feel that the prosperity of our manufactures is one main source of agricultural prosperity. I attach all due importance to the manufacturing interest; but I do not wish to appear as the partisan of one interest or the other. While, therefore, I admit the important influence which the manufactures of the country have upon the agricultural interest, I, on the other hand, maintain that agricultural prosperity is essential to the prosperity of our manufactures. If one should fail, there would not be merely a cessation of demand for the produce of the other, but that failing interest, being no longer able to discharge the burdens imposed upon it, those burdens would inevitably be transferred to the other. It is said, that I reserve to myself the details of any measure which I would support relating to the importation of corn. I do so; and why? Because I am constantly receiving, from the best friends of the agricultural interest, communications as to the improvements that may be made in those details. If I were to say, I will support a Corn-law against a fixed duty, and made no reservation as to details, why, such is the manner in which you fasten me down to every expression I make, that do I not know you would at once turn round upon me, and say, that I had incurred some positive obligations of honour to stand by every detail and every letter of the present Corn-law; and that the question was, not as to maintaining the principle of a graduated duty, but that the question was, as to maintaining, per-

manently and unalterably, every detail of the existing Corn-law—nay, that I was not at liberty to correct the admitted abuses of the present system—that I was not at liberty to prevent any sudden in-pouring of foreign corn, arising from the objectionable mode of taking the averages? I know, if I had made some such declaration as that, I should have been told, that I had committed myself, not only to the principle, but to the very letter of the existing law, and that I was precluded from making any alteration whatever in its details. The hon. Gentleman has asked me, and he has a right to ask me, whether I intend to maintain the present protection for agriculture. I know what he means. ["No, no!"] Yes, I do. He would require me to pledge myself to some specific details. That was his object, when he asked me what were my intentions upon the subject of the Corn-law. I will not give a specific answer. I state as much as any man can expect, or reasonably require, from an individual Member of this House. What I say is, that I prefer the principle of a graduated duty to a fixed duty, and that I think protection to agriculture, perfectly consistent with manufacturing prosperity. I do not attribute the present distress of the manufacturing interest to the protection which is given to the agricultural interest. It is you that have attempted to show that, I have not. At the same time, I will not bind myself irrevocably against any improvement in the details of the existing law. Supposing I undertook to give an answer on the details how should I act. "Tell me the pivot," said the hon. Gentleman. Why, was there ever anything so preposterous? If, indeed, I had followed the precedent, that has been set me, I may well have ventured to enter upon details; and if, after having given them, I should have altered them, we will say in the proportion of five to eight, no doubt, I should have had credit for it to-morrow. Why, here is a Government that had ten months to consider the question on which they wished to legislate, and that no less a question than one concerning the franchise in Ireland—a Government that came forward with a declaration of details, and yet who, immediately preliminary to the introduction of their bill, altered those details in the proportion of from five to eight; and this is the Government which thinks it decent

to call upon me to commit myself to details! Supposing I had given details, and supposing that afterwards, just before the discussion in Parliament, I, for the purpose of conciliating the votes of two or three agricultural friends—or four or five at the most, without any public objection or discussion, had altered those details, I know what imputations I should have been liable to. But these "chartered libertines," they may alter their details at pleasure; they, the Government! with full opportunity of considering their measure before propounding it! But every sort of imputation is to be thrown upon me, because I content myself with stating the general principles that would guide my conduct; and refuse, not being in office, to say what is the system of taxation I would propose, or what are the details of a bill on the importation of corn which I would support. Yes! here is a Government, who alter the details of one of their own most important measures from a 5*l.* to an 8*l.* franchise, with no other reason than to conciliate two or three votes, charging me with the concealment of my intentions, because I do not bring forward details! Now, allow me to ask the question, why were not these three great subjects, corn, sugar, and timber, brought forward at an earlier period of the Session? What pretence is there for not having named any one of them in the Speech from the Throne? If you *bond fide* intended to bring them under discussion, why, I ask, did you not mention them in the Queen's Speech? Is this the reason—that it is contrary to all precedent to refer to the details of measures until you are prepared to introduce them; that it has only a tendency to agitate the public mind, to disturb commercial enterprise, to divert the application of capital, and induce precipitate speculations? If these were your reasons, upon what principle do you demand of me, an individual Member of Parliament, without the responsibility of office, to make a declaration of my opinions as to details of such measures as these? You say, that the sugar and the timber duties formed part of the budget; but the Corn-laws formed no part of the budget. That might have been mentioned in the speech from the Throne, and the attention of Parliament might have been called to it at an earlier period. Nor was there any reason why the timber duties should not have been mentioned in



the Queen's Speech. There is a strong suspicion abroad, that you had two budgets, one for fair weather, and the other for foul; and it was not until foul weather had overtaken you, that you produced your present plan. To have prevented such an impression being formed, you should have alluded to these important questions in the Speech from the Throne, at the commencement of the present Session. You describe these measures as involving important considerations, as affecting the prosperity of the country; and you say, that the principles which you now avow, are the principles which must be ultimately adopted. Why, then, in justice to those principles, did you not urge them at an earlier period? What was the course you took with respect to the Import Duties Committee? Your measures are founded upon the report of that committee. But was that committee moved for by her Majesty's Government? Were the Members of her Majesty's Government aware of the intentions of those by whom that committee was appointed? Did any one Cabinet Minister attend that committee? Was any one question asked, by any Member of her Majesty's Government, of a single witness examined before that committee? Did the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, attend the sittings of the Import Duties Committee? No, not one day. And yet the report contains all that relates to the practical application of those great principles which her Majesty's Ministers now propound. Surely you must have been aware of the pressure of your finances as far back as from the middle of last year at least; and yet so little were you convinced of the soundness of those principles, which you now affirm to be necessary to the salvation of the country, that you permitted the Import Duties Committee to be appointed, without knowing well what its object was, and without thinking it necessary for any Member of the Government to attend upon it. If you thought it desirable to affirm the principles recommended in the report of that committee, why did you not make that announcement from the Throne? Or, if you thought that further inquiry was necessary, and additional evidence was required, why did you not, at an earlier period of the Session, move that that committee be reappointed? You

did neither one nor the other; nor did you take any step till the month of May; and then you brought forward, in a time of pressing political necessity, three great measures, founded upon the evidence, and exclusively upon the evidence, taken by that committee. It is this which compels me to say, that the manner in which you have brought forward these great questions, is one by which you neither do justice to yourselves as a Government, nor to the importance of the measures you propound. And again I say, if these principles are so excellent; if these measures, founded upon them, are so absolutely necessary for the salvation of the country, is it not most unfortunate that you should have incumbered them with your help, not on account of your actions as Ministers, but on account of your position as the executive Government. There is, depend upon it, a prevalent feeling in the country, that these measures could not have been passed in the manner in which they were propounded. Your object being to remove the commercial distress, and relieve the financial embarrassment of this country, to restore confidence, and to find means of profitably employing capital, I must say that you are striking the severest blow conceivable against the industry of the country, by leaving these three great questions in doubt for an indefinite period; by setting party against party, upon such a question as that of the Corn-laws; by stirring up society to its foundation; and by arraying against each other, in bitter discord, classes of the community whose harmony is essential to their own welfare, as well as to the happiness and safety of the State. You are now about to dissolve Parliament upon the cry of "cheap bread." You promise the substitution of a fixed duty for the present fluctuating one. My firm belief is, that a fixed duty will give no effectual protection to the agriculture of Ireland, or of many parts of this country. What the effect of it may be, is entirely doubtful. I believe it to be fraught with the most serious consequences. I do not believe, that you can paralyse agricultural prosperity, by a fixed duty of one shilling a bushel upon corn, without seriously affecting other interests connected with agriculture. But my firm belief is, that the course which you have taken, the appeals which you have made, the mode in which you have conducted this ques-

tion, and the excitements to agitation have been incurred through that mode of its introduction, will make it, when the time of difficulty shall come, impossible for you to resist the application of the same appeals, and to maintain that duty which you now state to be fixed and immutable. This is my firm conviction; and I now take my leave of the discussion of this question, and place it in the hands of the House, content, whatever may be the issue, with the course which I have pursued, which has been less with a view to any party advantage, than to the vindication of the just authority of the House of Commons, and to uphold the great principles of the constitution. Many may think that it would have been much better to have permitted you to go on with the discussion of the Corn-laws, and to have had three successive debates, and three successive minorities, each decreasing in numbers. That may have been a better and more political course, in respect to party. I know the advantages which I give you by bringing forward this motion. I am content to give you those advantages, because I think I should have been abandoning my duty, after the declaration you made, of its being your intention to continue in the ordinary performance of your official functions, notwithstanding the defeats you had met with, if I had acquiesced in that principle, and not asked the House of Commons, by some distinct declaration, to affirm or to deny the proposition, that you do not possess the confidence of the House, and that your retention of power, under such circumstances, is at variance with the spirit of the constitution.

The question was put as follows:—

“That her Majesty’s Ministers do not sufficiently possess the Confidence of the House of Commons, to enable them to carry through the House measures which they deem of essential importance to the public welfare; and that their continuance in office, under such circumstances, is at variance with the spirit of the Constitution.”

The House divided:—Ayes 312; Noes 311; Majority 1.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Acland, Sir T. D.	Alford, Viscount
Acland, T. D.	Antrobus, E.
A’Court, Captain	Arbuthnot, hon. H.
Adare, Viscount	Archdall, M.
Alexander, N.	Ashley, Lord

Ashley, hon. H.	Cripps, J.
Attwood, W.	Dalrymple, Sir A.
Bagge, W.	Damer, hon. D.
Bagot, hon. W.	Darby, G.
Bailey, J.	Darlington, Earl of
Bailey, J. jun.	De Horsey, S. H.
Baillie, Colonel	Dick, Q.
Baillie, H. J.	D’Israeli, B.
Baker, E.	Dottin, A. R.
Baldwin, C. B.	Douglas, Sir C. E.
Baring, hon. F.	Douro, Marquess of
Baring, hon. W. B.	Dowdeswell, W.
Barneby, J.	Drummond, H. H.
Barrington, Viscount	Duffield, T.
Bateson, Sir R.	Dugdale, W. S.
Bell, M.	Dunbar, G.
Benett, J.	Duncombe, hon. W.
Bentinck, Lord G.	Duncombe, hon. A.
Bethell, R.	Dungannon, Viscount
Blackburne, I.	Du Pre, G.
Blackstone, W. S.	East, J. B.
Blair, J.	Eaton, R. J.
Blakemore, R.	Egerton, W. T.
Blennerhassett, A.	Egerton, Sir P.
Boldero, H. G.	Egerton, Lord F.
Bolling, W.	Eliot, Lord
Botfield, B.	Ellis, J.
Bradshaw, J.	Estcourt, T.
Bramston, T. W.	Farnham, E. B.
Broadley, H.	Farrand, R.
Broadwood, H.	Fielden, W.
Brooke, Sir A. B.	Fector, J. M.
Brownrigg, S.	Fellowes, E.
Bruce, Lord E.	Filmer, Sir E.
Bruce, C. L. C.	Fitzroy, hon. H.
Bruen, Colonel	Fleming, J.
Bruges, W. H. L.	Foley, E. T.
Buck, L. W.	Follett, Sir W.
Buller, Sir J. Y.	Forester, hon. G.
Burr, H.	Fox, S. L.
Burrell, Sir C.	Freshfield, J. W.
Burroughes, H. N.	Gaskell, J. Milnes
Calcraft, J. H.	Gladstone, J. N.
Campbell, Sir H.	Gladstone, W. E.
Canning, rt. hn. Sir S.	Glynne, Sir S. R.
Cantilupe, Viscount	Goddard, A.
Cartwright, W. R.	Godson, R.
Castlereagh, Viscount	Gordon, hon. Captain
Chapman, A.	Gore, O. J. R.
Cholmondeley, hn. H.	Gore, O. W.
Christopher, R. A.	Goring, H. D.
Chute, W. L. W.	Goulburn, rt. hon. H.
Clements, H. J.	Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.
Clerk, Sir G.	Granby, Marquess of
Clive, hon. R. H.	Greene, T.
Cochrane, Sir T. J.	Grimditch, T.
Codrington, C. W.	Grimston, Viscount
Cole, hon. A. H.	Hale, R. B.
Colquhoun, J. C.	Halford, H.
Compton, H. C.	Hamilton, C. J. B.
Conolly, E.	Hamilton, Lord C.
Coote, Sir C. H.	Harcourt, G. G.
Copeland, W. T.	Harcourt, G. S.
Corry, hon. H.	Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.
Courtenay, P.	Hawkes, T.
Cresswell, C.	Hayes, Sir E.
Crewe, Sir G.	Heathcote, Sir W.

Heneage, G. W.  
 Henniker, Lord  
 Hepburn, Sir T. B.  
 Herbert, hon. S.  
 Herries, rt. hn. J. C.  
 Hill, Sir R.  
 Hillsborough, Earl of  
 Hinde, J. H.  
 Hodgson, F.  
 Hodgson, R.  
 Hogg, J. W.  
 Holmes, hn. W. A.  
 Holmes, W.  
 Hope, hon. C.  
 Hope, H. T.  
 Hope, G. W.  
 Hotham, Lord  
 Houldsworth, T.  
 Honstoun, G.  
 Hughes, W. B.  
 Hurt, F.  
 Ingestre, Viscount  
 Inglis, Sir R. H.  
 Irton, S.  
 Irving, J.  
 Jackson, Mr. Serg.  
 James, Sir W. C.  
 Jermyn, Earl  
 Johnstone, H.  
 Jones, J.  
 Jones, Captain  
 Kelly, F.  
 Kenble, H.  
 Kerrison, Sir E.  
 Kelburne, Viscount  
 Kirk, P.  
 Knatchbull, rt. h. Sir E.  
 Knight, H. G.  
 Knightley, Sir C.  
 Lascelles, hon. W. S.  
 Law, hon. C. E.  
 Lefroy, rt. hon. T.  
 Lennox, Lord A.  
 Liddell, hon. H. T.  
 Lincoln, Earl of  
 Lindsay, H. H.  
 Litton, E.  
 Lockhart, A. M.  
 Long, W.  
 Lowther, hn. Colonel  
 Lowther, Viscount  
 Lowther, J. H.  
 Lucas, E.  
 Lygon, hon. General  
 Mackenzie, T.  
 Mackenzie, W. F.  
 Mackinnon, W. A.  
 Maclean, D.  
 Mahon, Viscount  
 Maidstone, Viscount  
 Manners, Lord C. S.  
 Marton, G.  
 Master, T. W. C.  
 Mathew, G. B.  
 Maunsell, T. P.  
 Meynell, Captain  
 Miles, P. W. S.

Miller, W. H.  
 Milnes, R. M.  
 Monypenny, T. G.  
 Mordaunt, Sir J.  
 Morgan, C. M.  
 Morgan, O.  
 Neeld, J.  
 Neeld, J.  
 Nicholl, J.  
 Norreys, Lord  
 Northland, Lord  
 Ossulston, Lord  
 Owen, Sir J.  
 Packe, C. W.  
 Pakington, J. S.  
 Palmer, R.  
 Parker, M.  
 Parker, R. T.  
 Parker, T. A. W.  
 Patten, J. W.  
 Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.  
 Peel, J.  
 Pemberton, T.  
 Percival, Colonel  
 Pigot, R.  
 Planta, rt. hn. J.  
 Plumpton, J. P.  
 Polhill, F.  
 Pollen, Sir J. W.  
 Pollock, Sir F.  
 Powell, Colonel  
 Powerscourt, Visct.  
 Praed, W. T.  
 Price, R.  
 Pringle, A.  
 Pusey, P.  
 Rae, right hn. Sir W.  
 Reid, Sir J. R.  
 Richards, R.  
 Rickford, W.  
 Rolleston, L.  
 Rose, rt. hn. Sir G.  
 Round, C. G.  
 Round, J.  
 Rushbrooke, Colonel  
 Rushout, G.  
 St. Paul, Sir H.  
 Sanderson, R.  
 Sandon, Viscount  
 Scarlett, hon. J. Y.  
 Shaw, right hon. F.  
 Sheppard, T.  
 Shirley, E. J.  
 Sibthorp, Colonel  
 Sinclair, Sir G.  
 Smith, A.  
 Smyth, Sir G. H.  
 Smythe, hon. G.  
 Somerset, Lord G.  
 Sotherton, T. E.  
 Spry, Sir S. T.  
 Stanley, E.  
 Stanley, Lord  
 Stewart, J.  
 Sturt, H. C.  
 Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.  
 Teignmouth, Lord

Tennent, J. E.  
 Thesiger, F.  
 Thomas, Col. H.  
 Thompson, Mr. Ald.  
 Thornhill, G.  
 Tollemache, F. J.  
 Tomline, G.  
 Trench, Sir F.  
 Trevor, hon. G. R.  
 Trotter, J.  
 Tyrell, Sir J. T.  
 Vere, Sir C. B.  
 Verner, Colonel  
 Vernon, G.  
 Villiers, Viscount  
 Vivian, J. E.  
 Waddington, H. S.  
 Walsh, Sir J.

Walter, J.  
 Welby, G. E.  
 Whitmore, T. C.  
 Wilbraham, hon. B.  
 Williams, R.  
 Williams, T. P.  
 Wilmot, Sir J. E.  
 Wodehouse, E.  
 Wood, Colonel  
 Wood, Colonel T.  
 Wyndham, W.  
 Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.  
 York, hon. E. T.  
 Young, J.  
 Young, Sir W.  
 TELLERS.  
 Fremantle, Sir T.  
 Baring, H.

### List of the NOES.

Abercromby, hn. G. R.  
 Acheson, Viscount  
 Adam, Admiral  
 Aglionby, H. A.  
 Ainsworth, P.  
 Alston, R.  
 Andover, Viscount  
 Anson, hon. Colonel  
 Anson, Sir G.  
 Archbold, R.  
 Armstrong, A.  
 Bainbridge, E. T.  
 Baines, E.  
 Bannerman, A.  
 Baring, rt. hon. F. T.  
 Barnard, E. G.  
 Barron, H. W.  
 Barry, G. S.  
 Beamish, F. B.  
 Bellew, R. M.  
 Berkeley, hon. H.  
 Berkeley, hon. G.  
 Berkeley, hon. C.  
 Bernal, R.  
 Bewes, T.  
 Blackett, C.  
 Blake, M. J.  
 Blake, W. J.  
 Blake, M.  
 Blewitt, R. J.  
 Bodkin, J. J.  
 Bowes, J.  
 Brabazon, Lord  
 Bridgeman, H.  
 Briscoe, J. I.  
 Brocklehurst, J.  
 Brodie, W. B.  
 Brotherton, J.  
 Browne, R. D.  
 Bryan, G.  
 Buller, C.  
 Buller, E.  
 Bulwer, Sir L.  
 Busfield, W.  
 Butler, hon. Colonel  
 Byng, G.  
 Byng, rt. hon. G. S.

Callaghan, D.  
 Campbell, Sir J.  
 Carew, hon. R. S.  
 Cave, hon. R. O.  
 Cavendish, hn. G. H.  
 Cavendish, hon. C.  
 Cayley, E. S.  
 Chalmers, P.  
 Chapman, Sir M.  
 Chetwynd, Major  
 Chichester, Sir B.  
 Childers, J. W.  
 Clay, W.  
 Clayton, Sir W.  
 Clements, Viscount  
 Clive, E. B.  
 Collier, J.  
 Collins, W.  
 Colquhoun, Sir J.  
 Corbally, M. E.  
 Cowper, hon. W. F.  
 Craig, W. G.  
 Crawford, W.  
 Crompton, Sir S.  
 Currie, R.  
 Dalmeny, Lord  
 Dashwood, G. H.  
 Denison, W. J.  
 Dennistoun, J.  
 D'Eyncourt, rt. hn.  
 C. T.  
 Divett, E.  
 Duff, J.  
 Duke, Sir J.  
 Duncan, Viscount  
 Duncombe, T.  
 Dundas, C. W. D.  
 Dundas, F.  
 Dundas, hon. J. C.  
 Dundas, D.  
 Easthope, J.  
 Edwards, Sir J.  
 Elliot, hon. J. E.  
 Ellice, Captain A.  
 Ellice, right hon. E.  
 Ellice, E.  
 Ellis, W.

Eble, W.  
 Etwall, R.  
 Euston, Earl of  
 Evans, Sir De L.  
 Evans, G.  
 Evans, W.  
 Ewart, W.  
 Fazakerley, J. N.  
 Fenton, J.  
 Ferguson, Sir R. A.  
 Ferguson, Colonel  
 Fitzalan, Lord  
 Fitzpatrick, J. W.  
 Fitzroy, Lord C.  
 Fitzwilliam, hn. G. W.  
 Fleetwood, Sir P. H.  
 Fort, J.  
 Fortescue, T.  
 French, F.  
 Gillou, W. D.  
 Gisborne, T.  
 Gordon, R.  
 Grattan, J.  
 Grattan, H.  
 Greenaway, C.  
 Greg, R. H.  
 Greig, D.  
 Grey, rt. hn. Sir C.  
 Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.  
 Grosvenor, Lord R.  
 Grote, G.  
 Guest, Sir J.  
 Hall, Sir B.  
 Hallyburton, Lord DG.  
 Handley, H.  
 Hastie, A.  
 Hawes, B.  
 Hawkins, J. H.  
 Hayter, W. G.  
 Heathcoat, J.  
 Hector, C. J.  
 Heneage, E.  
 Heron, Sir R.  
 Hill, Lord A. M. C.  
 Hindley, C.  
 Hobhouse, rt. hn. Sir J.  
 Hobhouse, T. B.  
 Hodges, T. L.  
 Holland, R.  
 Horsman, E.  
 Howard, hon. E. G. G.  
 Howard, F. J.  
 Howard, P. H.  
 Howard, hn. C. W. G.  
 Howick, Viscount  
 Hume, J.  
 Humphery, J.  
 Hurst, R. H.  
 Hutchins, E. J.  
 Hutt, W.  
 Hutton, R.  
 Ingham, R.  
 James, W.  
 Jervis, J.  
 Jervis, S.  
 Labouchere, rt. hn. H.  
 Lambton, H.  
 Langton, W. G.  
 Leader, J. T.  
 Lemon, Sir C.  
 Lennox, Lord G.  
 Listowel, Earl of  
 Loch, J.  
 Lushington, C.  
 Lushington, rt. hn. S.  
 Lynch, A. H.  
 Macauley, rt. hn. T. B.  
 Macnamara, Major  
 McTaggart, J.  
 Maher, J.  
 Marshall, W.  
 Marsland, H.  
 Martin, J.  
 Martin, T. B.  
 Melgund, Viscount  
 Mildmay, P. St. John  
 Milton, Viscount  
 Molesworth, Sir W.  
 Moreton, hon. A. H.  
 Morpeth, Viscount  
 Morris, D.  
 Morrison, J.  
 Muntz, G. F.  
 Murray, A.  
 Muskett, G. A.  
 Nagle, Sir R.  
 Noel, hon. C. G.  
 Norreys, Sir D. J.  
 O'Brien, C.  
 O'Brien, W. S.  
 O'Callaghan, hon. C.  
 O'Connell, D.  
 O'Connell, J.  
 O'Connell, M. J.  
 O'Connell, M.  
 O'Ferrall, R. M.  
 Ord, W.  
 Oswald, J.  
 Paget, Lord A.  
 Paget, Colonel  
 Palmer, C. F.  
 Palmerston, Viscount  
 Parker, J.  
 Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.  
 Pattison, J.  
 Pease, J.  
 Peechell, Captain  
 Pendarves, E. W. W.  
 Philips, Sir R.  
 Philips, M.  
 Philips, G. R.  
 Phillips, J.  
 Pigot, rt. hon. D.  
 Pinney, W.  
 Ponsonby, C. F. A. C.  
 Ponsonby, hon. J.  
 Power, J.  
 Price, Sir R.  
 Protheroe, E.  
 Pryme, G.  
 Pryse, P.  
 Ramsbottom, J.  
 Rawdon, Col. J. D.  
 Redington, T. N.

Rice, hon. E. R.  
 Rich, H.  
 Rippon, C.  
 Roche, E. B.  
 Roche, W.  
 Roche, Sir D.  
 Rumbold, C. E.  
 Rundie, J.  
 Russell, Lord J.  
 Russell, Lord C.  
 Rutherford, rt. hon. A.  
 Salwey, Colonel  
 Sanford, E. A.  
 Scholefield, J.  
 Scrope, G. P.  
 Seale, Sir J. H.  
 Seymour, Lord  
 Sharpe, General  
 Sheil, right hon. R. L.  
 Slaney, R. A.  
 Smith, J. A.  
 Smith, B.  
 Smith, G. R.  
 Smith, R. V.  
 Somers, J. P.  
 Somerville, Sir W. M.  
 Spencer, hn. Captain  
 Standish, C.  
 Stanley, M.  
 Stanley, hon. W. O.  
 Stansfield, W. R. C.  
 Staunton, Sir G. T.  
 Steuart, R.  
 Stewart, J.  
 Stuart, Lord J.  
 Stuart, W. V.  
 Stock, Mr. Sergeant  
 Strangways, hon. J.  
 Strickland, Sir G.  
 Strutt, E.  
 Style, Sir C.  
 Surrey, Earl of  
 Talbot, C. R. M.  
 Talbot, J. H.  
 Talford, Mr. Serg.  
 Tancred, H. W.  
 Tavistock, Marq. of  
 Thornely, T.  
 Townley, E. G.  
 Troubridge, Sir E. T.  
 Tufnell, H.  
 Turner, E.  
 Turner, W.  
 Verney, Sir H.  
 Villiers, hon. C. P.  
 Vivian, Major C.  
 Vivian, J. H.  
 Vivian, rt. hn. Sir R. H.  
 Wakley, T.  
 Walker, R.  
 Wall, C. B.  
 Wallace, R.  
 Warburton, H.  
 Ward, H. G.  
 Wemyss, Captain  
 Westensra, hu. H. R.  
 Westensra, hon. J. C.  
 White, A.  
 White, H.  
 White, L.  
 Wilbraham, G.  
 Wilde, Sir T.  
 Williams, W.  
 Wilshe, W.  
 Winnington, Sir T. E.  
 Winnington, H. J.  
 Wood, C.  
 Wood, Sir M.  
 Wood, G. W.  
 Wood, B.  
 Worsley, Lord  
 Wrightson, W. B.  
 Wyse, T.  
 Yates, J. A.

## TELLERS.

Stanley, hon. E. J.  
 Maule, hon. F.

Lord John Russell, in moving that the House at its rising adjourn till Monday said, that he would reserve himself with respect to the course the Government would take until that day. All he would say now was, that he proposed to take a vote of supply on Monday, and take only such of the miscellaneous estimates, the necessity for which was so immediate that any delay would occasion great inconvenience to the public service, if not granted at the present moment. ["The Corn-laws."] He would state on Monday what course he meant to pursue on that question, but the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Robert Peel) having thought proper, in his reply, to bring new charges against the Government, which he had never heard of before, he must take till Monday to consider what steps he could best take to vindicate the Government.

Sir Robert Peel said, that a great part of the speech of the noble Lord consisted of an attack upon himself, but he would be exceedingly sorry if it were possible for the noble Lord to impute anything unfair to him, or that he had taken any advantage in his reply to bring forward fresh charges against the Government. It was not his intention to do so, and knowing that the noble Lord had no right of reply, he had not said one word upon the foreign policy. He would not deprecate the course which the noble Lord might think desirable, and he might take it for granted that the noble Lord would not bring forward the Corn-laws on Monday.

Lord J. Russell: Certainly not.

Mr. Hindley did not care twopenny for the charges against the Government, but he was exceedingly desirous of having the discussion on the Corn-laws; and he hoped the noble Lord would be prepared on Monday to name the day for the discussion.

Mr. Hume trusted the noble Lord would that night fix the time. Ample time had been allowed to consider this question. There was no doubt entertained by any one that the discussion on the Corn-laws must come on. As Tuesday was the first day, the noble Lord ought at once before he left the House to fix that day.

Motion agreed to.  
House adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, June 7, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Punishment of Death; Sugar Duties.—Read a second time:—Assessed Taxes Composition; Militia Ballot Suspension; Vaccination; Ordnance Survey; Court Houses (Ireland); Turnpike Roads.

Petitions presented. By the Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Roseberry, and Earl Fitzwilliam, from places in Scotland, Hampshire, and other places, for an Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Harewood, the Earl of Brownlow, the Earl of Winchilles, and the Earl of Cadogan, from Yorkshire, Carmarthen, Lincolnshire, and Suffolk, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.

CORN-LAWS—WAGES.] On some petitions being presented for the repeal of the Corn-laws,

The Earl of Radnor said, he would take that opportunity to advert to an extraordinary doctrine contained in a petition presented on Friday evening last by a noble Lord opposite (Lord Braybrooke). It was there set forth, that the agricultural labourers would rather have dear bread, and fair wages to pay for it, than cheap bread with inferior wages; and the

inference to be drawn from the argument advanced on that occasion by a noble Earl (Stanhope) whom he did not then see in his place, was, that a high price of corn was actually advantageous to the labourer. Now, it was inconceivable to him how it was possible that the consumer of any article could be benefitted by having the price of that article raised. The noble Earl, to whom he had alluded, had, in support of his argument, referred to two periods, in one of which, corn being dear, the agricultural labourer was well off, and in the other, corn being cheap, great agricultural distress prevailed. In answer to that, he begged leave to point to the evidence given before a Committee of their Lordships' House in 1836, when several competent witnesses (extracts from whose evidence the noble Lord read) stated, that in 1835-36, when corn was cheap, the agricultural labourer was in a very comfortable situation. Further, to show the distress occasioned by the dearness of corn, and the relief derived from having corn at a cheap rate, the noble Earl referred to the annual amount of poor-rates from 1821 to 1839, from which it appeared that the Poor-rates were increased or diminished as the price of corn rose or fell. It was impossible to adduce more direct evidence of the prevalence of distress than was supplied by the increase of the Poor-rates; and the return which he held in his hand showed, that in proportion as the price of corn was raised, the amount of the Poor-rates was increased; and, on the other hand, a reduction in the amount of the Poor-rates always accompanied a decrease in the price of corn. It was, therefore, evident to him, that dear corn was disadvantageous to the labourer, and that cheap corn was advantageous to him. Again, if they looked to the crimes committed in the agricultural districts, it would be found, by reference to a paper laid before Parliament (from which the noble Earl read an extract) that the number of crimes diminished when corn was cheap, but that crimes increased when corn became dear. How, he would ask, was it possible that the labourer could be better off by purchasing corn at a dear rather than a cheap rate? Why should such a contradiction be true with reference to corn, which was not true with respect to any thing else? If, for instance, one of their Lordships wished to buy a pair of horses, would he

not feel better pleased to purchase them at a cheap than at a dear rate? As to the rate of wages, it did not depend on the price of corn, but on the relative proportion of the demand and supply in the labour market. If there were but little employment, and large numbers competing for it, wages must fall; but if, on the contrary, the demand for labour was extensive, and the labourers few, wages must naturally rise. In conclusion, he would contend, that the statement, that dear corn was advantageous to the labourer was contrary to all evidence and to all experience.

Lord *Braybrooke* was not so much enamoured of these incidental discussions as his noble Friend, and, therefore, he would not go at length into the subject. It was unquestionably stated in the petitions which he had presented from *Essex*, that the labourers were better off when corn fetched a high price than when it was sold at a low one; and in that opinion he concurred. He had for three years been chairman to a board of guardians, and he had made it his hobby to inquire into the situation and to ameliorate the condition of the agricultural labourers; and he could state from experience, that, in 1834, 1835, and 1836, when corn was cheap, a great deal of agricultural distress prevailed.

The Earl of *Stradbroke* also felt convinced, that a very low price of corn did not operate beneficially for the agricultural labourer.

Lord *Ashburton* did not understand how bread could be brought down to a lower price without a diminution of wages. He knew not how it was possible that any poor man, or any rich man, could be so exceedingly credulous as to suppose that the price of bread could be reduced one half in this country, and that the rate of wages should remain the same. If this could be so, what became of the argument on the part of the manufacturers, that they could not compete with other countries on account of the high rate of wages which they were obliged to pay? If wages did not fall when the price of bread was reduced, then the expectations of the manufacturers would prove to be an entire fallacy. If the argument of the noble Earl opposite was correct, then must the great mill-owners learn from him that their calculation, as to a reduction of wages, was wholly fallacious. With re-

spect to the farmer, was it possible that he could continue to pay 12s. a week when he had to compete with the produce of foreign countries, where the wages of the labourer were exceedingly low? Any person of the most common understanding—any person outside the walls of a lunatic asylum—must see, that the British farmer, who paid his labourers 2s. a-day, could not compete with the foreigner, who only paid 3d. or 4d. a-day—as was proved by a document on their Lordships' Table. If the proposed alteration were carried, how was it possible for any man to say, that the cultivation of the land would still go on? Under such adverse circumstances, if the farmer wished to realize his capital, he had better go to Pomerania, Holstein, Mecklenburgh, or some other place in the north of Germany, where cultivation might be carried on at a cheap rate. If they looked at the common sense of the thing, they must see that the farmer could not go on, if the proposed plan prevailed! and it was a delusion to suppose that a high rate of wages, and a great reduction in the price of corn, could exist together.

The Earl of *Radnor* would ask, how were they to compete with the low wages in Ireland? The noble Lord (*Ashburton*) had said, that in parts of Germany, the average amount of labourers' wages was 4d. a day, and that if the duty were reduced on foreign corn, this country could not compete with that. But did the noble Lord forget that 4d. a day was the average price of wages in Ireland as well? It was so stated in the Poor-law reports. It was stated, that the highest average price was 6d. a day, and that the labourers were employed but eight months of the year, which reduced the average price to 4d. The noble Earl referred to a document which he said had been circulated through the country by the Society for the Protection of Agriculture, of which society he believed the noble Lord (*Ashburton*) was a member. That document stated, that the Government were about to permit the introduction of foreign corn at such a low rate of duty, as to deprive the agriculturist of all protection—a statement which was not correct, and which he was surprised to find issuing from such a society.

Lord *Ashburton* was understood to justify the publication of that document, in consequence of the statement which had

been circulated throughout the country, in order to create an opposition to the present corn laws, and to obtain signatures to petitions for their repeal—a statement to the effect that a reduction of the duty upon foreign corn would give cheap bread to the labourer. He admitted that he did belong to the society alluded to, but let it be recollected, that it was a society which had been established, to counteract the effects of the Anti-Corn Law Society, which was exciting agitation through the country, creating the grossest abuses, and putting forth statements of the most delusive and fallacious character. He and other noblemen had reluctantly joined the society referred to by the noble Earl, but with the conviction of its necessity, and the determination to act entirely on the defensive. If agitation had not been excited and carried to such an extent upon this question, the noble Earl would never have heard of the Society for the Protection of Agriculture.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* admitted, that the English labourers were better fed, and better clothed than foreign labourers, but the superiority of their condition, in his opinion, was to be attributed, not to the monopoly of the corn trade, but to the more advanced civilization of this country.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* felt the inconvenience of these occasional debates, and thought that the noble Earl who introduced them, ought to bring forward a separate motion on the subject. The object of the noble Earl was, to reduce the wages of the labourer to the lowest possible extent. If this were not his object, he could have none, for it was utterly impossible that the English grower could compete with the foreigner, except by such reduction. He was in the habit of mixing a good deal with agricultural labourers, and there was not one who had not expressed to him his desire for dear bread, and comparatively high wages.

The Earl of *Harrowood*, admitted that the state of the manufacturing classes in this country was never worse than it was at present. He admitted the great distress which at present existed, and which, he was greatly afraid, would continue; but he denied that that distress was to be attributed to the existing price of corn, or had anything to do with the corn laws. He attributed that distress to a very different cause. In that part of the country

where he resided, there were a great number of factories, and, indeed, every time he returned home, he perceived that fresh factories had been established. Was it possible to believe that persons who had real capital to build those factories with would embark their money in such speculations, at a time when the trade generally was in such a sinking and discouraging state? No; but the facts of the case were these, these factories were generally established upon false and fictitious capitals, the consequence of which was, the sudden breaking up of those concerns, which necessarily entailed the greatest distress upon the poor of the neighbourhood. The present state of the country was not, then, produced in consequence of corn being dear—not on account of the inability of manufacturers to get sale for their goods, but because the trade of the country was carried on in an unnatural manner, and upon a principle of underselling each other, and because the foreign markets, instead of being stocked by a good and wholesome supply, were actually glutted with a superabundant quantity of goods from this country, a great part of which, after being sent out, was sold at a loss. He was of opinion, that if they attempted to make any alteration in the existing corn laws, they might confer great advantage upon the employers, but they would inevitably injure the labouring classes.

The Earl of *Warwick* only rose to refer to the conduct of a society which had been mentioned by the noble Earl—the Anti-Corn Law League. They had been sending emissaries through the country, and writing letters to every Dissenting minister whose chapel was his own, requesting him to expose to his flock the “anti-Christian” operation of the Corn-law. He would read an extract of a letter sent by the council of the association to a Roman Catholic clergyman, in which he was invited to preach a sermon to his congregation, showing the unjust, immoral, and anti-scriptural character of these laws. As such agitation was carried on by the association against the present laws, surely the Society for the Protection of Agriculture might be allowed by fair and legitimate means, and they used no other, to meet their attacks, and resist their opposition.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* gave notice, that tomorrow se’night he should move a re-

solution, to the effect that it was the bounden duty of Parliament to take the subject of the corn-laws into consideration early in the next Session. Preparatory to that motion, he should to-morrow move, that either some of his excellent Friends, the clerks at the table be directed, or a select committee be appointed, to enumerate the various signatures of parties who had petitioned on this subject on either side of the question.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* suggested, that there should also be appended a statement of the residence and professions of those who had affixed them to their signatures.

Lord *Brougham* said, that after hearing the notice given by his noble Friend, he could not help calling their Lordships' attention to the fact, that he had two years ago brought forward a motion, which, if carried, would really have been the means of throwing some light upon this subject; but which their Lordships had rejected. Amongst other fallacies which the inquiry which he then proposed would have removed was, that cheap bread would lead to low wages. This was an assertion which he had never believed; on the contrary, he stated at the time he referred to, that he was prepared to prove upon oath at their Lordships' bar, that the very contrary would be the case. Their Lordships, however, rejected his motion, and also a motion which he afterwards made for appointing a committee on the subject. In reference to those motions, he must observe, further, that at the time he brought them forward, there was no temporary excitement existing in the country, caused by peculiar distress, or high price and scarcity of food; neither was there any other cause of political excitement existing in the country, to mar the salutary effect which he sought in the inquiry he proposed. He thought it peculiarly unfortunate, therefore, that her Majesty's Government, and their Lordships had not consented, at that time, to take up the subject; because he felt certain that if they had done so, both the minds of their Lordships, and of the country, would have been convinced by the facts which would have been adduced, of the propriety of making some alteration in these laws. With respect to the agitation now set on foot on the subject, though he was glad her Majesty's Government had been induced to change their views on the subject,

yet he could not help thinking that the time and circumstances under which it was now brought forward were unfortunate; and that the question would lose as much on the one hand, through those causes, as it gained on the other by the support and co-operation of her Majesty's Government. He doubly regretted, therefore, that the question had not been taken up at the time he had proposed. The noble and learned Lord then presented petitions for the repeal of the corn-laws, from the royal burghs of Annan in council assembled; and from a place in the county of Banff; also a petition from certain inhabitants of St. James's, Westminster, agreed to at a public meeting, in favour of a fixed duty on corn. With respect to the last petition, the noble and learned Lord observed, that he thought the petitioners should have carried their prayer further, namely, for a total abolition; nevertheless, he rejoiced that the Government had brought forward the subject, and proposed even the moderate remedy of a fixed duty, which he for one, however, should accept only as the most likely means of arriving at a total repeal.

Petitions laid on the table.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, June 7, 1841.*

*Movements.]* Bills. Read a first time:—Banks of Issue; Debts of Parishes.—Read a second time:—Dean Forest; Municipal Corporations; New South Wales; Bribery at Elections; Western Australia.—Read a third time:—Tithe Compositions (Ireland).

Petitions presented. By Mr. Calcraft, from Wareham, for Church Extension, and against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

LANDLORD AND TENANT—(IRELAND)  
—EXPLANATION.] Mr. *O'Connell* gave notice of a motion for leave to bring in a bill to amend the laws relating to landlord and tenant in Ireland. He would take that opportunity to allude to a matter personal to himself. The House was aware that, a few evenings ago, the hon. and learned Member for Bandon (Sergeant Jackson) made a very serious charge against him (Mr. *O'Connell*) of oppressing his tenants in Kerry, by distraining in April for rent due in March. Not having been in Kerry of late, he (Mr. *O'Connell*) did not know whether some agent of his might not have distrained some of the tenants from malicious motives; therefore, he did not rise at the instant to contradict



the statement. Since then, however, he had requested his son (Mr. Maurice O'Connell), who had the honor of being acquainted with Mr. Sergeant Jackson, to call upon that Gentleman to inquire the name of his informant, and his authority for the statement he had made; and, with the permission of the House, he would now read the letter he had received from his son, describing the result of his interview. It was as follows:—

“16, Pall-mall, Monday, June 7, 1841.

“My dear Father—I have just seen Sergeant Jackson. I told him that I came from you, to ascertain the name of the person whom he quoted in the House, the other night, as having stated, that he had known tenants of your's to have been distrained in April for rents due on the 25th of March previous, and also if possible, the names of the tenants.

“He said, that he did not know the names of the tenants; that a gentleman called on him some time since, in Dublin, and said he was a Kerryman, and his name Twiss; that Sergeant Jackson recollected having seen him on juries in Kerry, but does not know his Christian name or address; that this man then made allusion to a speech of your's about Irish landlords, and said that you yourself were a bad landlord; that he had been in Iveragh some time previous, had seen a number of cattle in pound in the month of April, and on inquiry, that he was told they belonged to tenants of your's, and had been distrained for the March rent. I asked what year this was in? Sergeant Jackson did not know, but said he had a memorandum of it somewhere, and promised to let me have a copy thereof. According to him, Twiss said he would swear to the facts.

“Your affectionate Son,

“MAURICE O'CONNELL.”

He was able to state, that up to the month of January last, when he was last in Kerry, no such thing had occurred; and, therefore, up to that period, as well indeed as up to that to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had referred, he was enabled to contradict the statement in the strongest possible terms. It was not for him to comment on the manner in which the charge had been made against him. The man's name from whom the information was received was not known—his address was not known—the only allegation was, that somebody had told the hon. and learned Sergeant, that so and so had taken place. He (Mr. O'Connell) begged to take that opportunity of denying, in the most distinct terms, that anything of the kind had occurred.

Mr. Sergeant Jackson observed, that

the statement made by the hon. and learned Gentleman as to what had taken place between him and the hon. Member for Tralee (Mr. Maurice O'Connell) was not precisely correct. The hon. Member for Tralee called upon him (Sergeant Jackson) that morning, and, as the hon. and learned Gentleman had stated, said, that he came, by his father's desire, to ascertain the name of the person to whom he had referred in the address he made to the House, in the course of the late debate.

He stated that he knew the gentleman perfectly well—that he had seen him serving on juries in the county—that his name was Twiss—that he had waited upon him (Sergeant Jackson), and told him that he had seen a speech made by the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. O'Connell), attacking, in his usual strain, the landlords of Ireland—that he knew from his own knowledge, that the hon. and learned Gentleman was himself a very harsh landlord, and that he would tell him (Sergeant Jackson) what he had seen take place in Kerry, in the month of April. He mentioned the year—[Mr. O'Connell: What year?] He mentioned the year to me at the time, and I took a memorandum of it; but not having that memorandum by me at the moment, I could not venture to name the year to the hon. and learned Gentleman's son this morning. I offered, however, to write to the hon. Gentleman, to inform him of the year, as soon as I had ascertained it by referring to my memorandum. The statement that Mr. Twiss made to me was—that he had gone to that part of Kerry in which the hon. and learned Gentleman's property was situated in the month of April; and that he there found the cattle of a number of the tenants of the hon. and learned Gentleman distrained, and driven to the pound, for rent due on the 25th of March. That was the statement that Mr. Twiss made to me. I asked if he was quite certain of the accuracy of what he had stated. He replied that he was perfectly certain of its accuracy—that I was perfectly at liberty to make use of it, and that he was prepared to come forward and prove it in any court, on any occasion. In the presence of Mr. Twiss, I took pen and ink, and wrote down the substance of what he had stated to me, observing that I should make use of it in the House of Commons, if ever the hon. and learned Gentleman repeated his attacks

against the landlords of Ireland. He stated that I was perfectly at liberty to do so, and that he should be ready at any time to come forward and substantiate all that he had told me. I should not otherwise have mentioned the matter in the House.

**Mr. O'Connell:** Now I appeal to the House to decide as to the fairness of this dealing. The hon. and learned Gentleman has stated, that he has a document. Ought he not to have had that document ready to produce when he made a charge of this nature? The hon. and learned Member says, that he made a memorandum, if he made a memorandum, ought he not to have ascertained the man's name? He knows as well as I do, that there are several Twisses on the Jury in Kerry. Ought he not to have taken down his address? ["Order."]

The *Speaker* said, if the hon. and learned Member had anything further to state in explanation of the facts, of course the House would be ready to hear it; but he submitted to him whether he ought to prolong this conversation when there was no question before the House.

**Mr. O'Connell:** I was merely saying this—that the name of the party accusing me is not given—that the address of the party is not given—that the date of the year is not given—and that the lands where this harshness is said to have been practised is not given. And this last fact is material; because I have but one property on which such a transaction could have happened, and that is the college property. On all the rest of my property the rent falls due in May and November. It appears, in short, that this charge has been made against me in the total absence of an accuser—in the total absence of any witnesses—in the total absence of dates—in the total absence of all particulars. I am, therefore, now entitled to pronounce it as gross a falsehood as was ever uttered.

**Mr. Sergeant Jackson:** Perhaps the House will permit me to say to the hon. and learned Gentleman, that I will make it my business to put him in possession of all the particulars at the earliest possible moment. I promised his son to-day that I would furnish the information this evening, if I could lay my hand on the memorandum I had made.

**Mr. O'Connell:** I don't know how the hon. and learned Gentleman can give the particulars of a falsehood.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS—HERTFORDSHIRE.] On the motion of Mr. Thomas Duncombe, John Samuel Storey, the clerk of the peace for the county of Hertford was called to the bar.

In reply to questions from the Speaker, Mr. Storey stated, that he had received an order from that House for a copy of the register of electors for the county of Hertford for 1840 and 1841; that he had not complied with the order, because the register was not in his possession, nor under his control; that he had no access to it; that by the 55th section of the Reform Bill, the sheriff of the county, not the clerk of the peace, was made the *custos* of the register; and that the register of the electors of the county of Hertford was accordingly in the possession of the sheriff of the county of Hertford. He was aware, he said, in reply to Mr. T. Duncombe, that under the 55th section of the Reform Bill he was bound to give a copy of the register to any one applying for it. He could not say what was the date on which he received the order of the House. The magistrates of the county of Hertford had constantly refused to print the register, and unless they allowed the expense there was no other way of defraying it. He (the witness), had, from his notion of respect for that House, refused to give that [which would be but the copy of a copy of the register. The witness, in continuation said, that he had no reason to doubt the authenticity of the copy in his possession. He refused to make a copy of a copy, because the order of the House required him to make a copy of the register itself. Did not send the copy in his possession because it belonged to the county.

The witness was then ordered to withdraw.

**Mr. T. Duncombe** said, it was quite clear to the House that this order was sent to the clerk of the peace. The hon. Member for Ripon had been decidedly of opinion, that it was the duty of the clerk of the peace to furnish a copy of the register. It was quite clear, after the statement of the witness, that he was in possession of the register, and that it was his bounden duty, as clerk of the peace, to furnish a copy of it to the House. An hon. Member had asked him if it was an authentic copy, and he replied that it was. It seemed that his only object, as an individual, in not furnishing this copy, was to

create delay, in order that the House might not be able to place it in the hands of the electors. It was for the House to say, whether it would have its order evaded for such a purpose. He thought it was quite necessary that this order should be enforced, and he would therefore move that the Clerk of the Peace, attend to-morrow with a copy of the register of the electors of Hertfordshire.

Sir E. Sugden said, that his opinion coincided with that of the majority of the House, that if the House made an order it must be obeyed, but this was a matter independent of an Act of Parliament. He thought the orders respecting this Gentleman were rather hard. The House did not appear to pay anything for the copy ordered, but, on its own authority, ordered a copy to be returned. Such an order must sometimes operate harshly on an individual. This Gentleman could not make a copy himself, but must pay to have it done; and though this was no reason why the power of the House should not be vindicated, it was a reason for not pressing harshly against an individual who had not transgressed against the order. The House required a copy of the register, and he had not the means of furnishing a copy, for the register was not in his possession. The hon. Member was aware this gentleman had a copy of the register in his possession, and asked him if he did not know that it was a faithful copy, to which the witness answered in the affirmative. He was then asked why he did not send that, and he answered, because it belonged to the county. Could there be a better reason? If he had the register in his possession he (Sir E. Sugden), thought he ought to have obeyed the House, and afterwards appealed to its justice for payment, but it struck him that this gentleman had not the power of obeying the order. There had been a trial of legal skill between the hon. Member for Pinnerbury, and the witness; but it appeared to him that the witness had the best of the argument.

Mr. O'Connell thought, that the witness acted under a mistake. He did not say he was to blame, for a more gross mistake, than that of the magistrates he was at a loss to imagine. According to the act the expense of furnishing copies of the registry was to be defrayed by the treasurer of the county, and it was also required by the act that the Clerk of the Peace should

have several copies of the registry, to be delivered on payment.

Question, that the Clerk of the Peace, for the county of Hertford, should attend at the Bar of the House to-morrow, and bring with him a copy of the register of electors for 1840 and 1841.

Agreed to.

PUBLIC OFFICES—PETITIONS.] Mr. G. Palmer wished to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he considered it fit that public offices should be used as places where public petitions ought to lie for signature, and especially whether the Excise-office should be used for the purpose of obtaining signatures to Anti-corn-law petitions?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer thought that such conduct would be improper on the part of the Excise authorities, but he thought that the hon. Gentleman must have been misinformed on the subject. If the hon. Gentleman, however, would give him the particulars, he would inquire into the matter.

CORN-LAWS — MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.] Lord John Russell said, that he had stated on Friday night, before the House separated, the course which the Government intended to pursue in regard to the committee of supply and the remainder of the estimates. He likewise then stated, that he would to-day announce his intentions in respect to the motion of the Corn-laws of which he had given notice. It would be in the recollection of the House, that he gave that notice on the day on which his right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, brought forward his budget and the financial statement for the year. He afterwards renewed that motion and fixed the discussion of it for Friday last. It was his intention certainly to bring it forward as a question of considerable importance, not merely for the purpose of discussion—because it had been frequently debated before—but he wished to obtain from the House their opinion in regard to the policy of an alteration in the Corn-laws, and in regard to the principle of the alteration which he meant to propose on behalf of the Government. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, had, however, fourteen days ago, given notice that he would move a resolution to the effect, that the present Ministers, having been

unable to carry through the House the measures which they deemed essential to the public interest, did not possess the confidence of the House, and that their continuance in office was at variance with the spirit of the constitution. After the right hon. Baronet gave that notice, he stated to his colleagues, for their consideration, that if the right hon. Baronet should succeed in obtaining a majority in favour of his motion, that his (Lord John Russell's) opinion in that case was, that he ought not to act under the authority which he had obtained from the Cabinet, and ought not to bring forward the motion of which, on the behalf of Government, he had given notice. He stated, that in the event of the House deciding that her Majesty's Ministers did not possess its confidence, and therefore ought not to continue in office, that it would neither be respectful to the House, nor consistent with his duty, to submit a measure of so much importance as the Corn-laws to the present House of Commons. It was not till after the determination of the House on Saturday morning last, that he again stated the question in the Cabinet, and when he did so, he gave an opinion which coincided exactly with that which he had previously expressed. He found that his colleagues concurred with him in that opinion, and therefore it was, that he did not mean to bring forward any measure on the subject of the Corn-law at the present time. But in stating that it was not his intention to proceed with the Corn-laws, he might perhaps be allowed not to go into the general question, but to state, that he should not have been deterred from bringing forward the motion by any of the various reasons urged against an alteration by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. He did not think that the reasons which induced the Government to postpone the consideration of the Poor-law Bill was at all applicable to the question of the Corn-law. It had been urged as a reason against proceeding with the discussion on the Corn-laws that it would increase the excitement already existing on that subject. He confessed, however, that it did not appear to him that the discussion of that question in the House of Commons was likely to have this effect. The reasons which he should have urged in support of his motion were grounded on the general policy of these laws, and he thought that he would have

been able to show not only that the question was one deserving the consideration of the House of Commons, but that the arguments against an alteration were unsound. He thought that all the extravagant assertions as to the consequences of an alteration in the duty, that the agricultural interest would suddenly be overwhelmed in ruin, and that the general prosperity of the country would cease, were far more likely to be corrected by discussion than otherwise. Had he gone on with the discussion, one branch of his argument would have been, that having now a larger population than in any previous period, the laws affecting the importation of corn imposed a greater restriction on trade and a greater evil on the community than any law since the time of Charles the 2nd, except the law which was in force from 1815 to 1828. Another branch of the argument to which he should have adverted would have been the importation of corn during the last few years, with the duty at which that corn was imported; and he thought that the result of that branch of his argument would have been to show that it could not be contended that this country was altogether independent of other countries for supplies of corn. In regard to the statement that the present law was intended for, and was productive of, protection to the agriculturist, he thought he could have shown, from what had occurred since 1828, that it had not prevented agricultural distress, and that the fluctuating duty at present existing had not only the effect of preventing a regular and constant trade with other parts of the world, by which steadiness of price might be maintained, but that it was, in fact, the cause of great variations in price in Prussia, and the other parts of the continent. He thought likewise that he could have shown that a fixed duty had been supported by some of the ablest writers who had considered the subject, not with a view to popular applause, but calmly in their closets, and with a view to the interests and improvements of the people. Without going into another branch of the subject, he could not avoid noticing an accusation which had been made against the Government, but which he had never yet noticed, namely, that they had resolved on bringing forward the subject solely with the view of producing excitement among the people, and not with the view of really

considering the question. Had he been permitted to bring forward the question, he thought that he could have shown that neither the intention nor the effect of the proposals [*interruption*].—They might allow him five or ten minutes to explain what would have been the general scope of his argument. He was about to say, that he could have shown that the intention of the proposal was not, nor would its effect be, to excite either extravagant hopes or false impressions. It was a proposal well worthy their attention, and was submitted to the House with a view of effecting an alteration in some of the most important laws which affected the condition of the people. In regard to the other arguments which had been urged against an alteration in the Corn-laws, he thought that he could have shown them to be equally inconclusive. Let it be recollected that the whole principle on which the budget had been brought forward was, that prohibition should no longer be continued; and that the deficiency in the revenue might be provided for by an alteration of the prohibitory duty. It would have been a course which would have given some advantage to his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in making his proposals if he had left the Corn-laws altogether on one side—if he had left that question as it was during some years past—as it was under the Government of Earl Grey when he assumed office in 1830, an open question, and had not considered it as in any way connected with the proposal regarding the sugar and timber duties, and various other matters. He repeated that the question might have been left as it was in the time of Earl Grey and Earl Spencer, an open question; but he did not think that such a course would have been fair towards the agricultural interests. It did not appear to him that they could have brought forward the general principle that prohibition ought to be done away with—that their whole tariff ought to be renewed—that alterations should be made, in order to increase the revenue, without at the same time bringing the question of the Corn-laws before the Legislature. Therefore he thought it the fairer and plainer course of proceeding to adopt these principles, not merely with a view to increase the revenue, for that was the smallest consideration, but with a view to the various other and extended interests which would be affected

by it, and therefore, at nearly the same time, he had thought it would be best to propose an alteration in the Corn-laws. He had now only one remaining statement to make as regarded the charge made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the course of his reply on Friday last. The right hon. Baronet stated, as he understood, his belief in the report that the Government had had two budgets prepared—a fair weather budget and a foul weather budget. It was stated at the commencement of these discussions, as a charge against the Government, that the budget had been a sudden thought—that his right hon. Friend, had, he supposed, in the course of a single morning, prepared the whole of those extensive alterations which he had proposed. That was a charge so extravagant that he had taken no notice of it, and the inventors of it, he imagined, had become so convinced of its extravagance that they had dropped it. He did not think, that there was any man, whatever his political party might be, who, as a confidential adviser of the Crown, and holding a responsible office in the Government, could so far forget his duty as to frame two budgets in order to suit his own political situation. He regretted, that the right hon. Baronet had brought forward so absurd a statement, and in a manner that led the House to suppose, that he thoroughly believed it. There was not the least foundation for the assertion. The course which Government now proposed to pursue was that which he stated shortly on Friday last. They proposed to take the civil contingencies, and some of the estimates in regard to the service in Canada and in China. In regard to the miscellaneous estimates, they would take the same course which was pursued in 1830, on the death of his Majesty George 4th. They proposed to take a sum on account of the miscellaneous estimates for six months from the 1st of April last, sufficient to supply the immediate wants of the budget, and prevent inconvenience to individuals and public officers. He did not think there could be any objection on the part of the House to allow the Government to take this course. The noble Lord the Member for North Lancashire said the other night, that the question of dissolution was not one which ought to be discussed in that House, and that it was a matter of prerogative; whether that

opinion was right or not, he thought no man would say, that, after the division of Friday night, when 623 Members voted, and there was only a majority of one in favour of the resolution of the right hon. Baronet, and when he believed there were only eight Members of the House who were not accounted for, either as having declared their opinion in the House, or of having suggested their opinion by pairing off—and the eight Members who did not either vote or pair off, certainly not being to be depended upon by either party in that House for their support, either of the existing Government or of any Government which the right hon. Baronet might form—when such a division of opinion prevailed in the House, he thought, whatever might have been the case before as to the propriety of giving any advice to her Majesty with respect to an appeal to the country, it must now be generally acknowledged, both in that House and in every part of the kingdom, that it was not very likely, that, during the continuance of the present House of Commons, any steady majority would be found in favour or support of the Government of either party. Such being the case, he confessed it appeared to him as clear as any proposition in politics ever did, that the only method of solving this doubt and difficulty was, that the country itself should decide upon questions which so gravely affected the interests of the country. And, if, on that decision being made, it should be a decision in favour of the party now in opposition, he thought it would be unavoidable, on the part of the present Ministers, to commence or continue any struggle for the purpose of their continuance in the offices they now held. But if, on the contrary, the country should decide the other way, and give a majority to her Majesty's present Government, then progress might be made in those measures which he and his colleagues thought so essential to the welfare of the country. This was the only statement which he had to make on behalf of the Cabinet with respect to the course which the Government meant to pursue. He had at least stated everything as fairly and plainly as he could, with regard to the intention of her Majesty's Government. He knew not, whether there was any other question which he had not touched upon, and concerning which any doubt or suspicion could arise. If there were, and if, con-

sistently with his duty, he could give any explanation upon it, he should be most ready to do so. The noble Lord concluded by moving the Order of the Day for the House going into Committee of Supply.

Sir R. Peel said, he would attempt to state, as clearly, as fully, and he hoped, as calmly as the noble Lord had done, the view which he took of the present position of the House in reference to those questions which the noble Lord had alluded to. He would in the first place notice what the noble Lord had designated as the charges which he (Sir R. Peel) had, in his speech in reply, at the conclusion of the debate on Friday, brought against her Majesty's Ministers. He rather believed, that there was only one charge of which the noble Lord could complain, and that was with reference to the Budget. It certainly was not his intention on Friday night to take advantage of the opportunity which the right of reply gave him to urge other charges against the Government, considering the circumstances under which the noble Lord was placed, of not being in a situation to answer him. Technically speaking, he should have had a perfect right to do so, but nothing would have been more repugnant to his feelings. For instance, when he heard the noble Lord the other night speak of the great success of the foreign policy of his Cabinet, and the achievements which the British arms had made in China, it certainly came across his mind to state what he considered were the abatements that ought to be made from the glory of those achievements; but knowing that the noble Lord, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, would not have an opportunity of replying, he abstained from saying a single word upon the subject. And now, with respect to the Budget, he certainly did state that there was an impression throughout the country, that the Budget had been adopted at a very recent period; that had circumstances been more favourable towards her Majesty's Government, probably those extensive measures they now had heard of would not have been submitted to the House. The noble Lord, however, had assured him that he was wrong; and that her Majesty's Government, having viewed the state of the finances, had at an early period prepared these measures for the consideration of Parliament. The noble Lord having given him this assurance, he

was bound to believe it, and he did so, and placed the most implicit confidence in it. At the same time, the charge which he made against the noble Lord, remained untouched, because the charge was this :— If her Majesty's Ministers contemplated these important measures, which partook less of measures of finance than of measures of relaxation of the commercial policy of the country, then it would have been much better to have called the attention of Parliament to the subject at an early period of the Session, and even in the speech from the throne. These measures were mainly founded upon the report of the Import Duties Committee [Lord John Russell signified his dissent.] The three measures relating to the reduction of the timber duties, the alteration of the Corn-laws, and the equalization of the sugar duties, were certainly touched upon in the evidence taken by the Import Duties Committee. He would not, however, dwell upon this, as he did not wish to provoke an argument. But what he on Friday night stated was, that no Member of her Majesty's Government had attended that committee, and he further observed, that if her Majesty's Ministers were convinced that in the evidence taken before that committee they found arguments in favour of these great measures, it would have been better either to have re-appointed that committee at an early period of the present Session, or in case they considered the evidence sufficiently conclusive without taking that step, and such as would justify their proceedings upon the evidence they already possessed, then considering that these were less measures of finance than of an important relaxation of the commercial policy of the country, he thought the attention of Parliament should have been directed to them at an earlier period. In the absence of all explanation, that was the circumstance which created the impression that those measures were the result of a sudden determination, owing to the unfavourable position of her Majesty's Ministers in the House of Commons. But after what the noble Lord had stated, he, of course, no longer retained that impression. On the subject of the Corn-laws, it appeared to him, that the noble Lord had only one of two courses to pursue—either to bring on the Corn-laws, or to abstain from advertng to them altogether. Either one or the other of these two courses was open to the noble Lord. He would not presume

to give an opinion as to which was the best course in the present position of her Majesty's Government, but he thought it was hardly fair to determine not to bring forward the Corn-laws, and then to give the House the main heads of the argument which he would have urged in favour of an alteration of those laws if he had determined to bring the question on. The noble Lord pointed out the four principal arguments upon which he intended to lay stress, and he would submit to the House that he could not state his view of those arguments, and attempt to impress upon the House those measures which induced him to take a different view of the question to what the noble Lord did, without provoking a very inconvenient discussion on the whole subject of the Corn-laws. It would be quite impossible. The noble Lord gave the heads of chapters of what would constitute his speech rather than the details of the speech itself, upon which, if he were to make any observations, he should be leading on a discussion which it was not the intention of the noble Lord to enter upon. He was the more disposed to give the noble Lord full possession of the advantage he had thus gained, and forego the opportunity of any discussion, because he confessed that the noble Lord's summary of his arguments had not made that impression on his mind which induced him to think any discussion necessary. Of course the noble Lord put in advance his four principal arguments, and they might safely conclude that the remainder were not so cogent as those he had put forward. He was perfectly willing, perceiving the immense inconvenience of the House being forced into a discussion upon the Corn-laws, hon. Gentlemen not being prepared, for it, to leave the noble Lord in possession of that advantage, which he thought was not quite fairly taken, by stating the main arguments upon which he intended to rely in case the discussion had been brought forward. The remaining point to which he wished to refer was the proposal of the noble Lord with respect to the votes in a committee of supply. He inferred from the statement of the noble Lord, that it was the intention of her Majesty's Government to appeal to the sense of the people, and to call a new Parliament. He would express no opinion upon the propriety of that course. He would leave the responsibility of it entirely with her Majesty's Ministers. He had understood on

Friday night, after the conclusion of the debate, that the noble Lord gave a notice somewhat of this kind. He would read the words, and he thought he must be accurate, for he took down the very phrase in which the notice was given. Speaking of the course which her Majesty's Ministers intended to pursue in consequence of the division, the noble Lord said, "We propose to take a vote of supply on Monday, and take only such of the miscellaneous estimates the necessity for which was so immediate that any delay would occasion great inconvenience to the public service if not granted at the present moment." Those were the terms used by the noble Lord. Now, while he distinctly wished to avoid all implied approbation of the course which her Majesty's Ministers were about to take—namely, that of making an appeal upon the subject of the Corn-laws to the sense of the people, while he left entirely with her Majesty's Ministers all the responsibility upon that question, yet he must at the same time say that he was not prepared to offer the slightest obstruction in the way of her Majesty's Government taking that course. He presumed there was a material distinction between assuming no part of the responsibility of a certain line of conduct to be adopted, and abstaining from any act by which her Majesty's Government might be obstructed in the adoption of that course. His opinion was simply this, that, leaving the responsibility exclusively with the advisers of the Crown—if they were determined to assume that responsibility, and to advise the exercise of the unquestioned prerogative of dissolving the Parliament, that responsibility ought to be assumed, and that prerogative ought to be exercised, with the least possible delay. He would say, that such should be the case at all times and under all circumstances; because the discussion of any important measure by a Parliament which knew from significant intimations that its days were registered, and its fate was determined, was evidently most inconvenient. He would say, also, without wishing on the present occasion to introduce one word of asperity or asperity as to the course taken by the noble Lord, that the peculiar position in which her Majesty's Government stood, after the vote on Friday night, gave an additional reason for the enforcement of the observation he had just made, and imposed an additional obligation on her Majesty's Ministers to

refer at once to the sense of the people. He did not think there could be a difference of opinion upon these propositions; as he had said before, inferring certainly from the course of the discussion which had recently taken place, and from the language held by Cabinet Ministers during that discussion, that her Majesty's Government had made up their minds, even if the decision of the House upon his resolution should be adverse, not to feel themselves bound to resign upon that adverse decision, but to take the sense of the people upon the measures they had proposed. When the noble Lord made the announcement on Friday night, that he should take such of the estimates as were absolutely necessary for the public service, he (Sir R. Peel) felt at once that it ought without delay to be conceded. But he must say that the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was of a different kind. The right hon. Gentleman proposed to take the whole of the remaining estimates—the civil contingencies, the commissariat, and the miscellaneous for England and Ireland, for the period of six months. That appeared to him to be a material departure from the usual course. [Lord J. Russell: The votes will be from the 1st of April.] That he knew. Wishing not to take any subsequent advantage of the position in which he stood, he would proceed to state what were his opinions with respect to the course which her Majesty's Government ought to adopt. He had already said, and the House appeared generally to concur with him, that it was the duty of her Majesty's Ministers to advise the Crown to dissolve Parliament as soon as possible, without inconvenience to the public service. He was aware that it was necessary that the annual Sugar Duties Bill should pass through its proper stages; and nothing was further from his intention than to prevent the passing of that bill, and enable the Government to provide for the public service. He thought that, not only ought the act of dissolution to be immediately (by immediately he meant as soon as it could take place consistently with the manifest demands of the public service); but, he must say that, according to all usage and under circumstances of all the cases that were analogous to the present, the new Parliament ought to be convoked immediately. He said this, not only with reference to the important questions to which



the public mind was alive, not only with reference to the immense advantage which it must be to all persons engaged in commercial speculations, or enterprise of any kind, to know what was to be the state of the law affecting the importation of corn—not only with reference to these considerations, but also with reference to the position of the Executive Government, which manifestly stood before the people as not possessing the confidence of the House of Commons. The combined force of these considerations compelled him to conclude that the interval ought to be as short as possible between the dissolution of the present Parliament and the calling together a new Parliament. No considerations of private or personal convenience of Members ought in the slightest degree to interfere. This was a great constitutional question, and reasons of great constitutional urgency precluded any consideration of a private nature. According to all analogy, and according to precedent under all former circumstances when Parliaments had been so dissolved, the succeeding Parliament had been at once summoned. The noble Lord would, no doubt, recollect that, in the year 1784, after Mr. Pitt dissolved the Parliament, as short an interval as possible was permitted to elapse before the succeeding Parliament was summoned. In 1807, after the Parliament of that day was dissolved, the succeeding Parliament was also called as soon as possible; and in 1831, when Lord Grey dissolved the Parliament, on account of some obstruction which the Reform Bill met with then, the dissolution was immediate, and the convocation of a new Parliament was also immediate. These were the three instances most analogous to the present in which that course was pursued. He thought, therefore, the House had a fair right to expect from her Majesty's Ministers that the new Parliament, if a new Parliament was to be called, should be assembled at as early a period as possible. If the noble Lord should think it consistent with his duty to make, on the part of her Majesty's Government, a public declaration that that was the advice which would be given by her Majesty's Servants to the Crown, he would say, that a declaration of that description from the noble Lord would be satisfactory to him (Sir R. Peel). He should consider a declaration made by the leader of the House of Commons, and who pos-

sessed the confidence of the Crown, was a declaration on which he could explicitly rely, as on a formal resolution of the House, passed for the purpose of controlling the conduct of the Government. He, therefore, would at once say, that if the noble Lord would announce that it was the intention of her Majesty's Government to pursue the precedents to which he had referred, and that they had determined at as early a period as the public service would permit, to dissolve the present Parliament and call a new one, it would be amply sufficient. The noble Lord would find there was no constitutional objection to his making such a declaration; none whatever; because, in the instance of the dissolution of the Parliament in 1807, the Crown distinctly notified to the Parliament that was about to be dissolved, that its successor would be immediately called. On that occasion, the following was the expression contained in the Speech from the Throne:—

“His Majesty trusts the early attention of the new Parliament, which he will forthwith direct to be called, will be applied to the prosecution of those important objects.”

Therefore, there was no constitutional objection on the part of the Crown to make a public declaration as to its intention with respect to calling another Parliament. In 1820, on the demise of King George the 3rd, the same course was pursued. The King informed the Parliament, which he was about to dissolve, that he had determined to call, without delay, a new Parliament: and in 1831, the last instance, and an instance when Lord Grey presided over the Councils of his Majesty William the 4th, in the Speech from the Throne, it was announced in these terms:—

“I have observed, with satisfaction, your desire to introduce strict economy into every branch of the public service. I trust the efforts of the new Parliament, which I shall forthwith direct to be called, will be applied to the prosecution of the same object.”

He hoped he had now shown first, that on four occasions, namely, on the occasion of 1784, and on the occasions of 1807, of 1820, and of 1831, the Crown did not object formally to notify to the Parliament, then sitting, that its successor would be immediately assembled, and he trusted, that in conformity with these precedents, the noble Lord would be able to give the present House of Commons that

which he conceived they had a right to expect, the same assurance. He would say nothing in addition to what he had already observed with respect to the peculiar position of the Executive Government, only to remind the House, that that circumstance constituted an additional reason for the adoption of the course which he had suggested. Supposing the noble Lord should find himself unable to give any such assurance, then he begged to say, that although he would not obstruct the noble Lord with respect to the immediate dissolution of the Parliament, and although he would give him whatever estimates he might require for the immediate public service, yet he could not be a party to a vote which would imply an opinion on his part that the Parliament might be dissolved, and its successor not be immediately assembled. It was quite clear, he apprehended, that if the noble Lord took a vote for the various remaining estimates for a period of six months, that was to say, from the 5th of April last to the 5th of October, that would clearly enable her Majesty's Government to defer the meeting of the next Parliament until October or November, or even later. He must say, he considered that would be an unconstitutional proceeding, and to which the House had a right to refuse its acquiescence. He would repeat, therefore, that if the noble Lord would give the assurance, in his place, that it was the intention of the Crown to pursue the course which had been pursued on former occasions, in that declaration, he should place entire confidence, and he would not quarrel with the period for which the estimates were proposed to be taken. But he would submit to the House, that taking a vote on the estimates for three months would be amply sufficient. Still he begged the House to observe, that so determined was he not to take advantage of his present position, for the purpose of inflicting upon any branch of the public service inconvenience, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer should say, that there were certain votes for which a grant of three months would not suffice, from their having been anticipated, or if he proved that during the interval of the dissolution of the present and the assembling of the new Parliament an extended vote ought to be granted, he would grant the additional sum. But if the noble Lord could relieve him from adopting any hostile course on this occasion, he

should be ready to withdraw all objection to the extended period for which the votes were asked; nor should he consider it necessary to require any absolute and formal guarantee in addition to any declaration the noble Lord might make as to the intentions of her Majesty's Government.

Lord *John Russell*: After what the right hon. Gentleman has said, I feel it necessary to address a few observations to the House, stating, in the first place, that I do not think, upon ordinary occasions, that giving the House any guarantee with respect to any advice which may be tendered by Ministers to the Crown would be convenient; not allowing that to be the usual course in ordinary cases, yet, considering the peculiar circumstances of the present case, and knowing the mind of my noble Friend at the head of her Majesty's Government, and what are his wishes upon this subject, I cannot have any hesitation in saying, that the advice we shall give to the Crown will be, that no time should be lost in dissolving the present Parliament and in summoning a new one. We feel that to be the most convenient course; and I, as holding the seals of office, still more personally feel all the objections that can be urged against continuing to act in office after the vote to which the House came the other night—a vote which we feel imposes upon us the obligation as soon as possible to refer that decision to the judgment of a new Parliament.

Sir *R. Peel*: The answer which the noble Lord has given is the answer which I myself anticipated; and, therefore, in fulfilment of my promise, feeling that in the noble Lord's assurance I can place the amplest confidence, I withdraw all objections whatever to the period of six months, for which the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, seeks a vote of supply.

Mr. *Villiers* said, that as the noble Lord the Secretary of the Colonies and the right hon. Baronet had stated what they called their view of the position of parties and the course they intended to take, and as Members seemed after that to consider that all real business was over, he hoped he might make one or two observations upon that question which had caused that position of parties, and upon which they were now about to disturb the peace of the country; and if he did not know what grave considerations that question involved—how closely con-

nected it was with the misery of many of our fellow creatures—he could really find matter for amusement in the predicament in which he saw some around him placed by it. It had been made matter of reproach, that the demand for a total repeal of the law was extravagant, that those who had leagued themselves together out of the House to instruct the people on the matter were too violent—that they should be more moderate—that they should leave it to the Government to bring it forward. Let the Government take it up, said some, and the landed interest will then consider it gravely—they will enter into it calmly—they will admit of some mitigation of the law, and settle the question. Now, then, he invited the attention of the country and the House to the present position of the matter. The question had been taken out of his hands; it had been so by the Government; and he had surrendered it with satisfaction, hoping that good might follow. They had proposed a measure, a moderate measure, fair as some called it, extravagantly in favour of the landed interest as he considered. How were they treated? Why worse than he had been—he had been allowed to have his say—he had been allowed to bring on his motion; but the noble Lord had not been suffered to bring on his. He gave his notice, announced the nature of his measure, and he fulfilled every condition which he had been told last year would secure serious attention to the subject, when down comes the right hon. Baronet opposite, and carries a resolution in the face of the noble Lord's notice, by a majority of persons whose interests are supposed to be involved in it, which has the effect of precluding the noble Lord from bringing forward his measure, of preventing a deliberate consideration of the subject, and in fact, of escaping themselves from a division. Well, then, that was the position of the question; the landowners were the majority of the House, they would not allow the law which gave them a monopoly to be altered, and they would not allow it to be fairly discussed. This was a question now seriously engaging the attention of every state in Europe, and the United States of America; their interests were all involved in it. They saw and understood the struggle. They knew the parties engaged in the conflict—which were those who profited by a monopoly of the subsistence of the people on the one side, and the advocates of unrestricted commerce with the rest of the world on the other; and this

week presented them with the first scene in this battle, little creditable to the country, though, doubtless, a triumph for monopoly—a deliberate refusal on the part of the landowners to suffer the question to be fairly debated. This House only represented their interests, and they could do what they liked with their own. He referred the other night to the close analogy that existed between the slave question in America, and the Corn-laws of England; that resemblance was now strengthened. This was the state of the slave question in Congress. They refused to discuss it. Two years ago, it was mooted and the Members all rushed from the House as they had done to-night. That subject was offensive to the interests of the majority in Congress, as the Corn-laws were to the houses here, and they refused to discuss it. Did that discourage him?—far from it. Did he advise the country to be disheartened by it?—quite the contrary. No cause in the name of freedom had ever fared better at first. He was glad, indeed, that this course had been pursued. People hated what was unfair in this country, and this would rouse them. They would now see the relative strength of their friends and their enemies; they would see the necessity of acting with energy. He liked the course taken by the opposite side on this account—it was bold and daring, and intelligible to all. He preferred it to the trimming course pursued before. It bid defiance to the people. It would compel the people to meet it. He was glad that a more delusive course was not taken, which might have been. He was satisfied that there was no ground in justice whatever for any tax on the people's food. Had the Government measure been adopted or spoiled by the landlords, the question of total repeal would hardly have had fair play. That question was now again fully before the country, and he defied any man to show that the people were not entitled to that full measure of justice. They bore the burdens of the country, and he contended that none were borne exclusively by the landlords. He rejoiced that the question had been agitated in the country upon this broad, intelligible basis, and that the people had put the landlords to the proof of their claim to a permanent tax upon the food of the community. As he had said before, he saw nothing in what was occurring then that did not raise his most sanguine expectations of speedy success. The question must now exclusively engage the

attention of this House till it was settled in some way. Constant reference would be made to it in all the business in the next Parliament, and he predicted a speedy dissolution again, and upon the same ground, of the Parliament about to be elected. The question never could be set at rest again, and he firmly expected that the end would be the total repeal of this iniquitous law. He believed that the country would have supported the noble Lord, had he disregarded all form on this occasion, and, in spite of the resolution so carried, had he brought on his measure. The country understood the noble Lord's position. The noble Lord had given his notice—he had fixed his day. The measure was offensive to the majority in the House, and they interposed a resolution, which they carried, declaring that he had not their confidence, and further interference was threatened. He had hoped that anything so unfair, so unusual, need not have been heeded by the Government. He was told, that in point of form the noble Lord was precluded from bringing it on, and that he could not have had a fair discussion if he was opposed in doing so. He thought, however, that it mattered little, for in truth the people understood the question, and the whole proceeding would mark it clearly to them in what way they ought to act in justice to themselves, and with regard to the interest of the country, now in such distress.

Mr. Wakley referred to the manner in which the right hon. Member for Tamworth on former occasions had deprecated excitement on the eve of a general election, although, at the present moment, he was anxious at once to go to the country, and to assemble Parliament again with all possible dispatch, in order to consider a great national question, which could not fail to excite the inhabitants of the empire from one end to the other. Now, popular clamour, pressure from without, and pledges of candidates on the hustings, were as nothing in the eyes of the right hon. Baronet. He did not complain of this; but he did complain that the right hon. Baronet, and those who acted with him, opposed the repeal of the Septennial Act, and would not hear of shortening the duration of Parliaments. It appeared not only inconsistent, but irrational, that the right hon. Baronet should wish to select a new Parliament for the discussion and decision of a question of such prodigious importance and interest, and

yet should be adverse to more frequent elections. It seemed to him, that all the great interests of the country were to be treated as toys and trifles, in comparison with the interests of party. Only three weeks ago his hon. colleague (Mr. Duncombe) had brought forward a motion to induce the Crown to take into consideration the case of certain political offenders. "No (said the right hon. Baronet, on that occasion). Touch not the prerogative of the Crown: it is too bright a jewel to be gazed at by Radical eyes. You must not be allowed to interfere with the exercise of the royal prerogative." He was therefore content to leave the matter in the hands of that very executive Government in which he declared by his resolution of Friday night, that he had no confidence. This inconsistency was apparent enough to people out of doors, although the right hon. Baronet might not be willing to acknowledge it. He (Mr. Wakley) trusted, that the noble Lord (Lord John Russell) would not obtain a majority by means of the dissolution: he hoped that neither of the great parties, strictly called Whigs and Tories, would obtain a majority upon the returns. He hoped, that the people would exercise their good sense, and that the result would be to extend the number and influence of that small party, to which, if to any, he had attached himself. That small party endeavoured to accomplish the public good without reference to individuals, and to maintain and advance the interests of the country, as contradistinguished from the sordid interests of party. He did not believe, that the right hon. Baronet himself wished to rule the country for party interests, and not for the general welfare. At no distant period he anticipated a scene of strife and confusion in this kingdom paralleled in no part of its history. The question of the Corn-laws was daily becoming more exciting and perplexing, and it struck many as extraordinary that Ministers, who, up to this Session, were increasing in unpopularity, the moment they brought forward a subject which justly rendered them popular, that very moment they were obliged to quit the Treasury Bench, and to appeal to the country. The secret was, that the influence of party was much more powerful than the interests of the country, and this evening sums to an enormous amount would be voted away without any

inquiry. How could such a system last? It could not last long against the good sense of the people. Before he sat down he wished to remind the right hon. Baronet of what he had said in 1835, when he met his new Parliament; but first he wished to remark, that he could not understand why so much deference was to be paid to the prerogative of the Crown at one time, and not at another. The people would thus see that the Crown was in truth but a puppet in the hands of a political faction, and they might in time be convinced that it was maintained, not for their benefit, but for the advantage of faction. What would be the result? They would say, that those who gained by the Crown ought to pay the expenses of the Crown, and the costliness of the establishment would be felt more and more every day. As to interfering with the royal prerogative by producing a change of Ministers, all he could say was, that he should like to see such changes every month, and a new Parliament every year, until the condition of the people was improved, and they were faithfully represented. To revert to the speech of the right hon. Baronet, to which he had already alluded, at the beginning of the Session of 1835, he might observe, that the right hon. Baronet was not then so niggardly of his promises as he had been lately; he had refused to give a single pledge as to the future. This course might be ingenious, prudent, sagacious, and convenient; but it was not satisfactory to him (Mr. Wakley), nor would it be satisfactory to the people. What had the right hon. Baronet said, soon after the publication of his celebrated Tamworth letter on the debate in the new House of Commons, on the motion respecting the address:—

“I make great offers, which should not lightly be rejected. I offer you the prospect of continued peace, the restored confidence of powerful states, that are willing to seize the opportunity of reducing great armies, and thus diminishing the chances of hostile collision; I offer you reduced estimates, improvements in civil jurisprudence, reform of ecclesiastical law, the settlement of the tithe question in Ireland, the commutation of tithe in England, the removal of any real abuse in the Church, the redress of those grievances of which the Dissenters have any just ground to complain. I offer you these specific measures, and I offer also to advance, soberly and cautiously, it is true, in the path of progressive improvement. I offer also the best chance, that these things

can be effected in willing concert with the other authorities of the state; thus restoring harmony, ensuring the maintenance, but not excluding the reform (where reform is really requisite) of ancient institutions.”

These were the offers and promises of the right hon. Baronet at that time. [Sir Robert Peel: and I repeat them now.] He was willing to admit, that as the opponent of Ministers, he had now and then rendered the country good service; but he was afraid, that the right hon. Baronet had also given Ministers his support at the very time when they least deserved support. The Irish Coercion Bill and the Poor-law bill were passed in 1833; and, instead of being opposed by the right hon. Baronet, they had been supported by him, while Tory candidates on the hustings had not scrupled to declaim against that very law which their leader had advocated. Formerly the noble Lord, the Member for North Lancashire (Lord Stanley) had belonged to a Government to which the right hon. Baronet was opposed, but after five or six years of friendly intercourse and sitting side by side, he was now, it appeared, fully prepared to take office under him. What did the noble Lord say upon the same occasion as that on which the right hon. Baronet spoke?

“But, Sir, of this I am confident, that no dissolution of any Government—no constitution of any administration can, since that great measure was passed—either impede or endanger the course of a temperate, salutary, and comprehensive system of Reform.”

The country ought, therefore, at the present moment, to have some information given to it as to that “salutary and comprehensive system of Reform.” Was it to be the sliding or the slippery system? Where was the pivot? Was the noble Lord’s Irish Registration Bill to be taken as a specimen of that “salutary and comprehensive system of Reform”? That measure was thought by many to be directly opposed to the principles of Reform and representation. There ought to be no concealment of their future views by statesmen [Sir R. Peel: At the proper time]. It had been supposed that the right hon. Baronet sometimes said one thing and meant another, but at all events he had expressed himself very distinctly hostile to the extension of the suffrage, and to the vote by ballot. There had

been no disguise about him upon those questions; but if he had a system of Reform of his own, the right hon. Baronet ought to state it. The country wanted the details, and the reserve was hardly fair towards those Reformers who might be disposed to support the right hon. Baronet as a Reformer. He (Mr. Wakley) trusted that public men during the coming election would be honest upon the hustings; for his part he was determined to exercise considerable industry in noting the declarations, whether of friends or foes. They should be sure to hear of it, if he had the honour of a seat, if they were guilty of any inconsistency and abandonment of their declarations when they got into the House. At the last election the Tories on the hustings declared against the Poor-laws, and on the strength of those declarations he had been urged to move for its repeal. People entertained a notion that the right hon. Baronet, as leader of the Tories, was opposed to the bill, and that if he did not vote against it, he would walk out of the House, and leave others to vote against it. He knew better; he knew that the right hon. Baronet would give the bill and the government his strenuous support, and accordingly when the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Fielden) moved for the repeal of the Poor-law Act, and he seconded the motion, out of a House of about 400 Members, they had only nineteen votes. These things lowered the character of the House, and lessened the confidence of the people. At a general election there was sometimes a great scarcity of candidates; now and then Members who could make long speeches were wanted, but oftener Members who had long purses. These were generally the most unscrupulous, and, having bought their seats, they resolved to sell them. However, he would keep an eye upon all, and would mark their declarations, especially on the new Poor-law: he would make a register of what candidates said upon the hustings, and, if he again had a seat, would take care to confront their conduct with their professions. At the same time he quite acquitted the right hon. Baronet of any disingenuousness: he had not said one word out of the House respecting the new Poor-law that was inconsistent with what he had said in the House.

Mr. Labouchere said, that the reply of the right hon. Baronet on Friday last con-

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tained graver charges against the present Government than had, perhaps, ever been comprised in any previous speech. His right hon. Friend had disposed of one of those charges—that relating to the fair weather and foul weather budgets, and as he was well acquainted with the sentiments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he could bear testimony that he had never varied from the opinion that the financial difficulties of the country were to be met, not by new taxes, not by a loan, but by dealing with the great interests in the manner proposed, to the great increase of the revenue, and the incalculable relief of commerce and manufactures. Another charge was equally unfounded. The right hon. Baronet supposed that Ministers had only determined to resign office or dissolve Parliament in consequence of his notice of a vote of want of confidence. He could assure the right hon. Baronet that this charge was just as unfounded as that of the two budgets, for the notice of the vote of want of confidence had not the slightest influence on the conduct of Ministers in that respect. The right hon. Baronet had also said, that if the measures regarding trade had been so long prepared, they ought to have been introduced into the Queen's speech. The truth, however, was, that they were not mere measures of trade; they were importantly connected with finance, and for this reason they had not been adverted to from the Throne. The budget had been brought forward at the earliest possible period, but without exciting false expectations and paralysing every branch of commerce, the intended change could not be announced until the period of the annual financial statement. The right hon. Baronet also contended that the measures were entirely founded upon the report of the committee on import duties. That report contained a great deal of useful information—more, perhaps, than any other document of the same kind; but the committee had made no discoveries, though they had been the means of circulating facts already well ascertained. The timber duties was not a new question in the budget; almost the identical measure had been proposed by Lord Althorp six or seven years ago, and the principle had received the sanction of a committee. Hon. Members on the other side seemed to think that the proposition respecting the Corn-laws was quite a sudden thought on the part of Government;

but in the debate upon the subject last year he had advocated a moderate fixed duty, and had even gone so far as to say, that the duty ought to be 7s. or 8s. The noble Secretary for the Colonies, in his speech upon the same occasion, had supported a moderate fixed duty, though he might not have stated what the amount of that fixed duty ought to be, and he went so far as to add, that if, in consequence of the motion of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, the House went into committee, a resolution to that effect would be moved by some Member of the Government. It did not need the report of the Committee on Import Duties to show that the subject of the sugar duties was of great importance. Ten years ago Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Grant had brought in a bill on the same principle as that which Ministers would have introduced, indeed, it went further, as regarded the differential duties. He would also ask the House and the right hon. Gentleman to consider the course taken by the Government in the present Session on matters of trade. If hon. Gentlemen would recollect the course taken by the Government in those matters, they must do Ministers the justice to say, that their measures were not taken in consequence of any particular party difficulty at any particular time, but from the general opinion that it was their duty as a Government thoroughly to review and consider the whole of our commercial and fiscal policy. What was the first motion of which he had given notice after the meeting of Parliament? The bill for putting the East-Indies and the West-Indies in an equal condition; and although that measure had not produced a great effect upon the East-Indians as free-traders, he did not regret that this measure was now the law of the land. He had next thought that it would be right to relieve the West-Indies from some of those burdens of which they had long complained, and for which protection had been granted to them. With that object he had brought forward the Colonial Duties Bill, and he regretted extremely that the state of the Session was such as to raise a doubt whether that measure could be brought to a satisfactory conclusion. He recollected, however, that when he was bringing it forward he was asked by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Goulburn) what were the intentions of the Government with respect to the larger

measure, and he had stated then, what he would state now, that he was ready to defend the Colonial Duties Bill upon its own merits, and that, whether it were intended or not to alter the sugar duties, he was not prepared to say. It was clear from the question, that the right hon. Gentleman saw clearly to what the first measure would probably lead. He mentioned these things because he heard it said that the Government in a fit of desperation, and for the object of party, had brought forward these measures. He thought that nothing would be more unworthy of a Government or of an individual, for the sake of mere party interest, to tamper with great questions of this nature. He conscientiously believed, that the Government did not deserve the aspersions that had been cast upon them, and he was indeed surprised that hon. Gentlemen who had watched the course of the Government upon these questions should so treat their present proposal. It was the wish of the Government in the present Session to make other important changes. They had made an alteration in the rum duties; they had prepared bills for the alteration of the sugar, timber, and corn duties; but they had not intended to stop there. It was his intention in the Customs Bill to have introduced many measures which would have conferred important benefits on the commercial community, and in those proposals he would have followed the same principles as in the other measures of trade which they had submitted. Nothing was more unfair than to charge them with having flung themselves upon extreme measures. They saw that the country was gradually dividing itself into two great parties; they saw great interests banded together on one side, and the great commercial and manufacturing population on the other; and he must say, that he thought that all the evil of former times that had arisen from opposing factions was as nothing compared with what would have taken place now, if they had allowed these things to occur without the interference of the Government and of the Parliament to restore tranquillity and content, by the only measure which would restore them, a measure of fairness and justice to both parties. If the Government had shown no consideration for any prejudices that might still exist, if they had had recourse to extreme measures of free trade, and had trusted to popular clamour to

carry them, he admitted that they would have been liable to just imputation; but it was ludicrous to hear it stated that the measures which the Government had proposed were founded on extreme opinions. Good God; When they left a protection of 50 per cent. upon sugar, and a still higher protection on timber, and a very large protection to the home grower of corn, to hear that they had yielded to clamour, and to have it said that the Government had not fairly and impartially considered these questions in all their bearings! In conclusion, he would only advert to the charge which the right hon. Gentleman had thrown out against his (Mr. Labouchere's) conduct, in not having attended the meetings of the committee on import duties. It was true that he had not attended. The committee was appointed late in the Session of Parliament; he was at that time engaged on four other committees, one of which—the Inland Bonding Warehouses—he regularly attended, and it was utterly impossible for him to attend more. But it was not accurate to say that no Member of the Government attended that committee. One of the Lords of the Treasury did attend, and another, as well qualified as any in that House to take part in such measures, his right hon. Friend, the Paymaster of the Forces, also attended. It was very curious to mark how he had been dealt with during the present Session, with respect to committees of the House. When he brought forward the East-India Rum Bill, he was taunted with going against the recommendations of a Parliamentary committee; and now he was reproached with bringing forward a measure which was, no doubt, in accordance with the spirit of the committee on import duties, and he was represented to have servilely followed that committee, as if he had no opinions of his own. Now, since he had been in office, he had always followed one course—he had always thought that he had abundant means of information within his own office upon these matters, and that he ought not to throw the responsibility upon any committee; but, at the same time, he had never opposed any motion for a committee which might be thought necessary by any independent Member, and which was brought forward by him. Of course, when the committee had made their report he gave to it his respectful attention and consideration, but he had never felt bound to

adopt its recommendation against his own opinion, and that had always been the course which he had thought most conducive to the public advantage. He did not know that it was necessary for him to trouble the House at greater length; he would not have risen if it had not been for the charges brought forward in his reply by the right hon. Baronet, and he hoped that they had been satisfactorily answered.

Colonel *Sibthorp* really supposed that it was high treason in that House for any hon. Members upon that side of the House to make any accusation against her Majesty's Government; but he would nevertheless, say, that he had no opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the budget, or in anything else that he did. He declared moreover, his belief that the Government had done no one act to benefit the public, or to promote the dignity of the Crown and the character of the country. They did not hesitate to employ the secret service money to the extent of 13,000*l.* in St. Alban's and other places, nor to promise to their supporters and friends places and promotion, whilst they charged those who exercised the common rights of hospitality with bribery and corruption. There was 1,815*l.* to be paid to Mr. Vizard, including the annual salary of 1,500*l.* a year, and 1,900*l.* as a last payment to Dr. Bowring. He had nothing to say against the one or the other of those gentlemen, but he objected to fooling away money in this way. He would, therefore, ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, if he now consented to a general vote, he would be at liberty to take the sense of the House on these details in the next Parliament? He would tell his constituents on the hustings, and he hoped soon to be there, that a more profligate, lazy, and inefficient Government had never sat on those benches. He thought, the Chancellor of the Exchequer a very excellent man out of the House, but he must say he could not think as much of him in it; and it was known that he was never given to pay compliments. He, therefore, required an answer to his question; because he did not think it consistent with his duty to give up public life whilst he had health left, and if, as no doubt he would, he should again appear at that table, he told the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he would be found as willing to oppose those details as he was at the present moment.



The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that he had been asked by the gallant Officer, whether he would have a full opportunity hereafter of discussing all the items in the Miscellaneous Estimates; and in reply, he must say, that with regard to Dr. Bowring, the gallant Officer must be aware that the sum charged had been already paid last year, but that, as he did not intend to retire from public life, it would be perfectly competent for the gallant officer to make any observations and speeches that he might now postpone. But as the early part of the present discussion had turned on the charges brought forward the other evening in the reply of the right hon. Baronet, he trusted that the House would bear with him a few minutes whilst he made some short observations. The right hon. Baronet had charged him with having a double budget, and had since received communications from other hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, that the right hon. Baronet had made the accusation of the suppression of one budget, because in a proposed Queen's speech the right hon. Baronet had received information which could prove the fact. Imputations of this kind, as they grew, became more and more particular, and he was informed since he came into the House, by several parties, that the right hon. Baronet had actually in his possession information that proved the charges against the Government. Of course, he took it for granted that these hon. Gentlemen were not without some cause for their assertion.

Sir R. Peel said, that he had not the slightest information more than was in the possession of other Members. What he spoke of the other night, was not from more information than was possessed by other Members; it was a suggestion of the moment, and what he said was matter of surmise, and not from any particular information that he had.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* was perfectly satisfied with what the right hon. Baronet had said, but during the whole course of the debate, it was a confident imputation put forward by hon. Members one after the other. So far for the double budget. He thought, however, that he could show the House, that this was not the only point on which the right hon. Baronet was wrong. He would state some figures, for the purpose of settling the right hon. Baronet right upon some mat-

ters of detail. The right hon. Baronet had said the other night, "I should find, on being restored to power, that we, who left a clear surplus of 2,000,000*l.* of revenue—that we, who in three years reduced twenty millions of debt, as well as reduced the interest one million annually, must deal with a deficit of eight millions, after an administration of five years." Now, in the first place, the right hon. Gentleman's statement about the 2,000,000*l.* of surplus was not correct. True it was, that in the last year of office the right hon. Gentleman had a surplus revenue of a considerable amount, but it was spent. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge took off taxes, and so far from leaving a surplus of two millions, he had, as it was stated by Lord Ashburton, left a surplus of not more than 300,000*l.* His own Chancellor of the Exchequer stated it only at 1,600,000*l.*, and he afterwards lost several taxes, commuted others, and repealed more. What was the practical result? When Lord Spencer brought forward his budget, he stated the amount, which the right hon. Gentleman left him to spend, and at the time he made the statement, it was his interest to place it as high as possible; and what his right hon. Friend said was, that the surplus was 300,000*l.*, as the amount of the excess of income over expenditure, as left by the right hon. Gentleman's Government; and if he, therefore, gave the right hon. Baronet the benefit of a doubt, and raised the amount from 300,000*l.* to 500,000*l.*, he would over estimate the surplus that was left. He thought, that the right hon. Baronet had seen a little double when he talked of the two millions. The next point on which he conceived the right hon. Gentleman to be in error, was as to the twenty millions of debt which the right hon. Baronet had said that he had paid off. Now this statement was not quite correct, and it was not quite incorrect. It was true, that the amount of the capital of the debt had been reduced twenty millions, but if hon. Gentlemen were in the belief that twenty millions had been paid off out of the surplus revenue of the right hon. Gentleman, they were under the greatest delusion. 10,000,000*l.* had been converted into terminable annuities; no doubt this was an exceedingly good arrangement, but when the right hon. Gentleman said, that he had paid off twenty millions, it was not

accurate. What would any hon. Gentleman say if he were told by his steward—"I have converted 100,000*l.* of your debts and changed them into terminable annuities, so that your debts are all paid off." Here, again, the right hon. Baronet had seen a little too much. Then the right hon. Gentleman stated, that the annual payment on account of the national debt had been reduced nearly a million. He would like to have the right hon. Baronet's figures, for he could find no such reduction. If he had been an opponent of the right hon. Baronet in Parliament, and he had intended to bring forward a charge against his Government, he should have felt it to be his duty to give him some notice of what he proposed to do, but he thought, that the right hon. Baronet had acted towards him with some unfairness in bringing forward this charge at a period when there was no opportunity of his replying. [Sir R. Peel: I made the same statement on the debate on the sugar duties.] The right hon. Baronet had undoubtedly made some statement on that debate, to which he offered an explanation, which was received with shouts of derision by hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he was not aware that any statement had been made by him such as the right hon. Baronet had brought forward on the debate on the resolution of want of confidence. But with regard to the matter in question, he found that his figures did not tally with those of the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet had spoken of the reduction of the interest of the national debt between the years 1827 and 1831, by the amount of one million. He found, however, that the amount, was, in 1827, 28,825,000*l.*, while in 1831, it was 28,341,000*l.*, so that the reduction was 484,000*l.* only, and the right hon. Baronet had arrived at an incorrect conclusion to the extent of upwards of half a million. He would now go to those deficiencies to which the right hon. Baronet had alluded, and which he had stated to have amounted to seven millions. What the right hon. Baronet had intended to say, of course, must have been taken to be, that during the period of the Government of the present administration the expenditure of the country had exceeded its income by that amount. He found that for the year ending the 5th April, 1836, the surplus revenue was 1,376,000*l.*, while for the

year 1837, it was 1,863,000*l.* In the course of the years 1838, 1839, 1840, and 1841, the deficiency amounted altogether to 6,163,000*l.*; so that the surplus of two years being 3,239,000*l.*, and the deficiency for the four years being 6,163,000*l.*, the actual result of the deficit was only 2,924,000*l.*

Sir Robert Peel: What was the deficiency for the last five years?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* took the calculation for six years, and the right hon. Baronet would recollect that the present Government had, in 1835, taken upon itself the West Indian loan of twenty millions; so that, if he took away the surplus of that year, he ought also to relieve them of the loan. But the result of this calculation was, that instead of the diminution being 7,000,000*l.*, it was less than 3,000,000*l.* But there was another point to which he should refer, and to which it had not been his intention to allude at the present time, but for the statement made by the noble Lord, which would prevent his giving that information which he had proposed upon the debate upon the Corn-laws. The objection was made when the budget was first brought forward, and it was asked, "How do you calculate your corn? Last year you received 2,700,000*l.* for corn; you calculate on an increase of 400,000*l.*" He had stated to the House that the customs yielded twenty-two millions, and he calculated upon their future produce being of about the same amount—the produce of corn being altogether thrown aside. Upon the average of the years from 1835 to 1839, with the addition of 5 per cent., he calculated that the total amount produced would be 21,500,000*l.* That was the entire amount, throwing aside, as he had already said, anything that might be derived from corn. Taking the average amount received for corn during the last six years, and also since the time when the Corn-law first came into operation, it was just that he should calculate the increased produce at 500,000*l.* The House was well aware that corn and malt to a certain degree counterbalanced each other. If there was a bad harvest, a large revenue was received from the importation of corn, but if it was a good harvest, and less was received from that source, the amount of malt duty increased. Taking the corn duty, therefore, at 500,000*l.*, he might expect the malt to yield 5,506,000*l.*, which

was under the estimate, and under the produce for every year since 1835, except 1838. During those years, with the exception of 1838, corn and malt had produced more than he had calculated. The year 1838 happened to be a year in which corn was introduced at a low duty, which had produced the result to which he had referred.

Sir Robert Peel said, that the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, had placed him in the same situation of difficulty in which he complained that he had himself been placed, because he had entered into an explanation of circumstances which he was unprepared to meet. If the right hon. Gentleman had intimated to him that he had intended to call upon him to sustain the calculation which he had produced on a former evening, he should have come prepared to give what answer he could. Upon the debate upon the sugar duties, he (Sir Robert Peel) had said, that during the last five years there had been a deficiency of nearly eight millions—a statement which he afterwards corrected by reducing the amount which he named to 7,600,000*l.* He wished now to state the grounds on which he sustained that view. In a paper laid on the Table of the House, and signed “Robert Gordon,” it was shown that during the last five years, there had been an accumulated deficiency of 7,600,000*l.* In calculating that deficiency, he had taken it from the year 1838 to 1841, and also the estimated deficiency for the present year ending April, 1842. In 1838, the deficiency was 1,428,000*l.*; in 1839, it was 430,000*l.*; in 1840 it was 1,457,000*l.*; in 1841, it was 1,851,000*l.*; and the estimated deficiency for 1842, was 2,400,000*l.*; so that the total amount of deficiency was 7,566,000*l.*

*The Chancellor of the Exchequer:* You are not calculating it as a matter of surplus at all.

Sir Robert Peel had no right to set off the surplus revenue of the years 1836 and 1837 against the deficiency. The present Government began with a great surplus of revenue, but in the last five years a melancholy contrast had been presented. If he was to take the whole seven years, of course the deficiency would not be so great, but when right hon. Gentlemen spoke of the present alarming state of the finances of the country, and their prosperity during the first two years of their

administration, they only aggravated the charge to which they were open.

Mr. Herries had heard the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with great surprise. He had not been able to contradict the fact that for the last five years there had been a continually increasing deficiency, now amounting to seven millions and a half. Of all the arguments he ever heard he thought it the most extraordinary that, because they had a surplus for two years, that surplus should be put forward as a set-off against continually recurring deficiencies. But, if that argument was good, why did the right hon. Gentleman stop at the two first years—why did he take credit for the six millions and a half of surplus that existed when Lord Althorp was Chancellor of the Exchequer? Why did not the right hon. Gentleman add Lord Althorp's surplus of six millions and a half to the three millions that he claimed credit for, and thus he might on the same ground claim credit for nine millions? Now, with respect to what the right hon. Gentleman had stated, he begged to say that during the years between the peace and 1828, when his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge was Chancellor of the Exchequer, thirty-one millions were paid out of the public moneys in the remission of taxes. During the administration of his right hon. Friend he had applied ten millions to the reduction of the public debt. During the time that Lord Althorp was Chancellor of the Exchequer, he had applied six millions and a half to the reduction of the debt. Lord Montague had applied about three millions to the same purpose. However, during the last five years the deficiency amounted to seven millions and a half. In answer to this it was said that the present Government had taken off a large amount of taxes; but were they the only Government that had done so? When Lord Montague brought forward his first budget, he had done justice to the efforts of former Administrations in the reduction of taxation. He had said that he could only be a gleaner in the field, that the harvest had been gathered by the Wellington and Liverpool Administrations. He told the House that since the peace forty-two millions of taxation had been reduced, of which thirty-three millions had been reduced by the Liverpool and Wellington Administrations. He hoped, there-

fore, he should not again hear of any more exclusive claims for the present Administration on account of the reduction of taxation. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that there had not been a surplus of more than a few hundred thousand pounds left by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge, and had therefore urged that his calculations were erroneous. Now it was the duty of a Finance Minister to make provision according to the best estimates he could procure, and state to the House what would be the probable surplus, and he was fully justified in acting on those estimates, although he might be disappointed in the result. His right hon. Friend had estimated his surplus at 1,600,000*l.*; it did so happen that during the next year, owing to circumstances which it had been impossible to foresee, the actual surplus had fallen short of that amount; but the following year Lord Althorpe found the surplus greatly increased. He went into these details for the purpose of showing the great contrast between this and all former Administrations. All former Administrations had had a surplus, but the present Administration had a deficiency.

Mr. Hume was amazed at the charges brought against the Government by the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet was quite as responsible for the deficiency as the Government. The Government had been foolish enough to suffer themselves to be entrapped into increased expenditure by hon. Gentlemen opposite. He had told them at the time what must be the consequence of such profuse expenditure; but they had chosen rather to listen to hon. Gentlemen opposite than to him, and therefore the right hon. Baronet had no right to the claim he had put in, that he would have managed the finances better. The whole excess of expenditure had been owing to the misconduct of the Tories and the weakness of the Whigs—Tories urging them to an extravagant expenditure, and the Whigs having the weakness to yield to them. Did the right hon. Baronet forget that five millions taxation had been reduced, and yet the revenue had only fallen by one and a half millions? He would admit that from 1836 there had been no relief, but the revenue had been annually increasing, and the average revenue of 1839, 1840, and 1841 exceed-

ed that of the four preceding years by 600,000*l.* There had been no deficiency of revenue, and the present deficiency was entirely owing to an increased expenditure, against which he had protested year after year. The army, the navy, and all the establishments, had been increased in consequence of the representations of hon. Gentlemen opposite, to which the Government had had the weakness to yield. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had themselves created the deficiency, and now they turned round upon the Government, in a manner very little creditable to any party, and taunted the Ministers with the deficiency, which they themselves had occasioned. Let hon. Gentlemen point out one instance, with the single exception of the vote to Prince Albert, in which they had ever given an economical vote; and even on that occasion, when he had moved to reduce the grant to 21,000*l.*, they had divided against him. But they said if they had been in office they would have managed better, they would have had no deficiency. No; because they would have laid on new taxes. Then they raised this outcry in order to blind the people as to the real question at issue. A more bare-faced attempt to mislead the public he had never heard of. He had seen many things in that House, and had frequently blushed at the effrontery of hon. Members, but a more shameless and scandalous attempt to impose upon the public, he had never known. If they were so anxious to have the deficiency made good, why did they stand in the way of the remedy the Government proposed? Up to the month of January last, he should have cared little whether the Administration had been Whig or Tory, but now when the Ministers brought forward measures calculated to benefit the country, he felt bound to give them his support. He was glad to see they were bringing forward measures calculated to turn public attention to the real causes of the distresses of the country. The real author of the committee on the import duties, was the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, as it was in consequence of the right hon. Baronet's speech on the Corn-laws, that he had been induced to move for that committee. The right hon. Baronet had said, that he had no objection to consider the question of the Corn-laws, but that he did not think it right to the landed interest to bring for-

ward that question alone, but that all the interests should be considered together, and in consequence of that speech he had moved for the committee. He rejoiced at the prospect they had of removing the shackles from industry. They had last year laid on an additional 5 and 10 per cent. on the assessed taxes, and in that the right hon. Baronet had concurred, but when he had proposed last year to meet the deficiency by making the landed interest, which was not taxed at all, contribute a proportion to the public burdens by imposing on landed property a legacy duty similar to that paid on all personal property, and which would have produced a revenue of 3,000,000*l.*, the right hon. Baronet voted against him. The fact was, that as long as land was not touched, hon. Gentlemen opposite cared not how they increased those taxes the burden of which was borne by the working classes. The complete failure in the expected increase from the additional tax might have shown the hon. Baronet how vain it was to attempt to raise the revenue by any further tax upon industry. Let the House of Commons reduce the expenditure which had led to the deficiency, and he believed, that that would be the ultimate result. Her Majesty's Ministers had been supported by hon. Gentlemen opposite in every proposition for increasing the public burdens. They had been very helpless to do any good, but powerful to do ill when supported by the Opposition in measures which he conceived to be against the principles upon which they took office. He rejoiced that her Majesty's Government had brought forward so large and comprehensive a measure, and that the present Parliament was about to be dissolved. The time was come when an appeal should be made to the people. It was necessary for the interests of the country, that the House should be more decided one way or the other. It could not longer remain in its present position. He was confident that the electors would not throw away the opportunity afforded to them of returning a better Parliament. Those Gentlemen who supported the resolution went to the country with a declaration that they would not remove the taxes which were put into the pockets of individuals by the protective duties; that they would not allow sugar to be cheaper, and were determined to continue that tax, by which five millions were paid last year out of the

pockets of the industrious classes. They declared, that they would not admit cheap corn; that they would keep up all the necessities of life at the highest price. He would repeat, that he looked with confidence to the results of the elections. It was a great disadvantage that the Corn-laws should not be previously discussed. The want of a single additional Reformer to secure the discussion of that subject was greatly to be deplored. He regretted that they had not had the opportunity of proving that 8*s.* protection was a tax amounting to 30 or 40 millions a-year, upon the industry of the country and that that would go into the pockets of the country gentlemen. The right hon. Member for Tamworth and his party had come forward by their resolution to prevent the discussion of this subject; that was, in fact, their sole object in proposing it, and he hoped the country would so understand it. The situation of the country was truly distressing. There was a population starved by the landholders, laws were passed which positively starved the people by inches. Whilst some countries were cursed with an unproductive soil, and others with calamities arising from the climate, the people of England were doomed to be starved by the landed proprietors. It was melancholy to think that they could lay their heads on their couches whilst there was so much misery of their creation, the result of their monopoly. Every one who had voted no confidence in her Majesty's Ministers had, in fact, voted against the discussion of the Corn-laws, because they wished to have the advantage on the hustings of having said little or nothing on the subject. He deplored the ignorance which existed with reference to it, and hon. Gentlemen opposite shared in the ignorance which existed as to the real cause of the distress. Still he looked with confidence to the coming struggle, believing that the people of this country would not allow class interests to prevail. It would be impossible for any who took the course of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that of setting themselves against all reduction of taxation, and all relief to the working classes, to reflect for a few moments and not feel that they had a heavy responsibility resting upon them. He would be sorry to feel himself liable to those charges which he now made against them and against every man who wished to keep up

monopoly and to prevent that alteration which was called for by an increasing population. He took the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade as a pledge by the Government, that they were prepared, should they continue in power, to carry out a large and liberal reform. Even hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they would only examine the subject, would see the necessity which existed for such a measure. How could they visit the manufacturing districts, and reconcile it to their consciences to maintain the monopoly? The people at present paid all the taxes—the landed proprietors did not pay one shilling. He would take upon himself to prove that the landed proprietors of this country were as free from taxes as were the nobility of France in 1789. The only difference was, that in France the injustice was more open. The country gentlemen had a monopoly amounting to more than double what they paid towards the public expenditure. Last year they had on a moderate calculation eighty millions of money raised from the industry of the people, whilst that they contributed did not amount to twenty-five millions. He contended, therefore, that they were in a better condition than the noblesse of France at the period to which he had referred. The events of history should teach them what was to be expected from such a state of things. At this moment the landed proprietors from one end of the country to the other did not pay one quarter of the fifty millions of taxes; their monopoly, therefore, was a legal plunder upon the mass of the people. The common sense of the people would teach them how to act in their present position. From one side they had to expect relief, from the other nothing but taxation and oppression; and he had no doubt that hon. Gentlemen opposite would be foiled in their attempt to secure a majority in the next House of Commons.

Mr. Goulburn wished to say a very few words. If he had expected, that the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer would have entered so largely into the question of finance, he should have come down to the House furnished with the papers which had been quoted by his right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, in the debate of Friday last. But he had left the House early in the evening under the impression that Ministers were anxious to go at once into the committee

of supply, and that therefore all debate would be avoided. He would now merely allude to one point which had been mentioned by the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That right hon. Gentleman had, as he understood, for he was not in the House at the time, stated, that the statement of his right hon. Friend, the Member for Tamworth, as to the reduction of 20,000,000*l.* in the national debt was erroneous. He (Mr. Goulburn) could confirm that statement in every particular, and not on his own authority either, for in 1831 Mr. Spring Rice made a statement of what had been the amount of the national debt at the time of the Duke of Wellington's entering into office, and also at the time of his leaving it. According to that statement, the Duke, on entering office, found the capital of the debt to amount to 777,000,000*l.*, and on leaving it the amount was only 757,000,000*l.*, while the interest was, during the same period, reduced from 25,000,000*l.* to 24,000,000*l.* The right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said, that his right hon. Friend had no right to take credit for the reduction of the capital, seeing that it had been effected by the creation of terminable annuities. That might be true if the capital only had been reduced, but the fact was, that the interest had also been reduced, although the direct tendency of the creation of the terminable annuities must have been to cause its increase. Under these circumstances, he thought the House would agree with him, that his right hon. Friend had acted quite fairly in taking credit for a reduction of the national debt effected during the time he had held office.

Sir De Lacy Evans said, the hon. Member for Kilkenny had been comparing the aristocracy of this country with the noblesse of France, and he thought the comparison a very good one, except that the French aristocracy had not introduced so much sophistry and complication into their system of finance as were to be found in that of this country. The public would yet understand the true nature of the case; and, whatever successes might attend the right hon. Baronet and his party, the present disastrous state of affairs would, he had no doubt, turn out to the advantage of the country. He believed, that the people would yet make the hon. Gentlemen opposite understand, that they knew the object of the right

hon. Baronet's motion was to prevent a discussion on the Corn-laws and a dissolution. He must say, that the right hon. Baronet had pursued a fallacious and unworthy course; but he would find it difficult to screen himself under such tactics. The public would learn that the whole design of the enormous verbiage of the late debate was to stifle the question of the repealing the Corn-laws. The right hon. Gentleman had shown great sensitiveness about interfering with the prerogative of the Crown, when the hon. Member for Finsbury brought forward his motion for the liberation of political offenders in England and Wales; but he said not one syllable upon the merits of the question, and yet twenty four hours afterwards, he brought forward a motion of a most decisive character interfering with the prerogative of the Crown, and now, in his speech upon that motion, he twitted her Majesty's Government for not being able to sustain the prerogative of the Crown against the attack of the hon. Member for Finsbury on the preceding evening. These were inconsistencies which the public would detect and understand. He ventured to say, that so great was the injustice by the existing system of fiscal duties and taxation, that the terms "fraud" and "plunder" were not too strong to apply to that system. ["*Hear, hear.*"] That was the sort of language which he would hold upon every occasion. He might be wrong, but he believed he was right. Therefore it would be unworthy of him to go before his constituency and not use the same language which he used in that House.

House went into Committee of Supply.

On the motion of Sir R. Peel, the sum of 31,786*l.* was voted for the expenses of the British Museum.

In answer to Sir R. Peel,

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that all the estimates except that for the China expedition, would be for the half year. That estimate was for the whole year, because it was matter of account with the East India Company, who had to make up their accounts in order to pay their dividends.

The vote (400,000*l.*) for the Chinese expedition was then agreed to.

A vote of 1,624,791*l.* for the Commissariat, Canada, and the miscellaneous service was also agreed to.

The House resumed.

**BOROUGH IMPROVEMENTS.]** On the motion that the committal of the Boroughs Improvements Bill be postponed until tomorrow,

Sir *E. Knatchbull* objected to the postponement of bills in this way. It was the duty of the Government at once to state what measures they intended to proceed with.

Mr. *Townley Parker* observed, that the noble Lord the Secretary for the Colonies stated, that he did not intend to proceed during the present Session either with this bill or the Buildings Regulations Bill; they should therefore be withdrawn at once.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that his noble Friend would state to-morrow what bills he intended to proceed with, and what he proposed to postpone.

Sir *Robert Peel* understood the noble Lord to state, that he would not proceed with these bills during the present Session; it would therefore be better to remove these bills from the notice paper.

Motion agreed to.

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.]** Sir *J. Y. Buller* moved the committal of the Municipal Corporations Bill.

Sir *C. Douglas* opposed the motion, on the ground that it would have a most injurious effect on his constituents.

Mr. *Dissett* wished this bill to be postponed until next Session.

Sir *J. Y. Buller* said, he had been accused of bringing in a bill to plunder the town of Exeter, and he was anxious that the measure should be proceeded with, in order that those who were concerned might learn how groundless the accusation was, and that the bill would, on the contrary, be most beneficial to Exeter.

Sir *Robert Peel* thought, that the bill was good and just in itself, but he entertained some doubts as to proceeding with it. He feared, that by doing so, they would be overloading the statute book with public general acts for local places. To a great extent this measure only applied to Exeter; but if it succeeded, they would be asked for acts of a similar character for a number of other places in detail. In his opinion it would be better to pass some general measure on the subject.

The House divided on the question that the Speaker do leave the Chair:—Ayes 58: Noes 31: Majority 27.

*List of the AYES.*

Acland, Sir T. D.	Iygon, hon. General
Ainsworth, P.	Morpeth, Viscount
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.	Muskett, G. A.
Barry, G. S.	Nicholl, J.
Berkeley, hon. G.	O'Brien, W. S.
Bolling, W.	Palmer, G.
Brotherton, J.	Parker, R. T.
Campbell, Sir J.	Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.
Clerk, Sir G.	Patten, J. W.
Clive, hon. R. H.	Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.
Copeland, Mr. Ald.	Pendarves, E. W. W.
Courtenay, P.	Philips, M.
De Horsey, S. H.	Plumtre, J. P.
Ewart, W.	Pryme, G.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.	Pusey, P.
Gordon, R.	Rae, rt. hn. Sir W.
Greg, R. H.	Richards, B.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Grimsditch, T.	Stewart, J.
Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.	Stock, Mr. Serjeant
Hepburn, Sir T. B.	Turner, E.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.	Wakley, T.
Hindley, C.	Warburton, H.
Hobhouse, T. B.	White, A.
Hope, hon. C.	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Howard, P. H.	Wilde, Sir T.
Hurt, F.	Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Inglis, Sir R. H.	
James, W.	TELLERS.
Kemble, H.	Buck, L. W.
Knatchbull, right hon.	Buller, Sir J. Y.
Sir E.	

*List of the NOES.*

Archbold, R.	Philips, G. R.
Dugdale, W. S.	Roche, Sir D.
Ellis, W.	Rundle, J.
Evans, W.	Scholesfield, J.
Gillon, W. D.	Shirley, E. J.
Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.	Smith, R. V.
Hawes, B.	Style, Sir C.
Hector, C. J.	Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.
Hodgson, R.	Thornely, T.
Hume, J.	Turner, W.
Leader, J. T.	Vernon, G.
Lowther, hn. Colonel	Walker, R.
Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.	Wood, C.
Morris, D.	Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.
O'Brien, C.	TELLERS.
Pease, J.	Divett, E.
Pechell, Captain	Douglas, Sir C.

Bill went through Committee

**BRIBERY AT ELECTIONS.]** Mr. Fox Maule moved the second reading of the Bribery at Elections Bill.

Sir R. Peel wished to know whether it was intended to proceed with this bill?

Mr. Fox Maule replied that his noble Friend would be in his place to-morrow, and would state the bills he intended to press.

Sir R. Peel did not object to the second

reading of the bill; if the noble Lord intended to press it he would give his best consideration to its details, but he thought that it was desirable that the House should have full time to consider them. To say the least of it, it was a bill which required a good deal of consideration.

Mr. Fox Maule trusted that the House would at least agree to the principle of the measure.

Colonel Sibthorp stated, that if the noble Lord attempted to proceed with this bill, he would oppose every clause of it. A more clap-trap and objectionable bill had never been brought into Parliament. He had opposed a similar bill some Sessions ago, and the only object of the present measure on their part was to entrap Members in a way never attempted before by a Government. The Government was capable of any dirty trick which an Administration could resort to.

Sir E. Sugden said, he should not oppose the second reading, but he objected to the mode in which the clauses were drawn up relating to treating.

Bill read a second time.

**CLERK OF THE PEACE (LANCASTER).]**

On the motion that the Clerk of the Peace (Lancaster) Bill be committed,

Sir F. Wilmot moved, as an instruction, that the committee be empowered to make provision for compensation for losses sustained by officers, by reason of charters granted to certain towns.

The Attorney General opposed the motion.

The House divided on the question that the instruction be given:—Ayes 22; Noes 46;—Majority 24.

*List of the AYES.*

Buller, Sir J. Y.	Parker, R. T.
Clerk, Sir G.	Patten, J. W.
Codrington, C. W.	Plumtre, J. P.
Copeland, Mr. Ald.	Rushout, G.
Courtenay, P.	Scholesfield, J.
Dugdale, W. S.	Shaw, rt. hon. F.
Gladstone, J. N.	Shirley, E. J.
Grimsditch, T.	Sibthorp, Col.
Hodgson, R.	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Hurt, F.	Wynn, rt. hon. C. W.
Knatchbull, rt. hon.	TELLERS.
Sir E.	Douglas, Sir C.
Morgan, O.	Wilmot, Sir E.

*List of the NOES.*

Ainsworth, P.	Bernal, R.
Archbold, R.	Bowes, J.
Barry, G. S.	Campbell, Sir J.



Divett, E.	Philips, M.
Ellis, W.	Philips, G. R.
Evans, W.	Pigot, right hon. D.
Gordon, R.	Protheroe, E.
Greg, R. H.	Pryme, G.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.	Roche, Sir D.
Hastie, A.	Rundle, J.
Hawes, B.	Rutherford, rt. hn. A.
Hayter, W. G.	Stock, Mr. Serjeant
Hector, C. J.	Style, Sir C.
Hindley, C.	Thorneley, T.
Hobhouse, T. B.	Turner, W.
Howard, P. H.	Villiers, hon. C. P.
Hume, J.	Walker, R.
James, W.	Wallace, R.
Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.	Warburton, H.
Marsland, H.	Wilde, Sir T.
Morris, D.	Wood, C.
O'Brien, C.	
Pease, J.	TELLERS.
Pechell, Captain	Maule, F.
Pendarves, E. W. W.	Brotherton, J.

#### House in Committee.

Mr. Bolling moved a clause that the Borough of Bolton be exempted from the operation of this bill.

On the question that the clause be read a second time,

The Attorney General intimated to the hon. Member that the bill affected Lancaster only.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 9; Noes 52;—Majority 43.

#### List of the AYES.

Copeland, Mr. Ald.	Rushbrooke, Col.
Courtenay, P.	Sibthorp, Col.
Douglas, Sir C. E.	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Dugdale, W. S.	
Hodgson, R.	TELLERS.
Knatchbull, rt. hon.	Bolling, W.
Sir E.	Grimsditch, T.

#### List of the NOES.

Archbold, R.	Hobhouse, T. B.
Baring, rt. hon. F. T.	Howard, P. H.
Barry, G. S.	Hume, J.
Blackburne, I.	James, W.
Bowes, J.	Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.
Brotherton, J.	Marsland, H.
Buller, Sir J. Y.	Morris, D.
Campbell, Sir J.	Parker, R. T.
Clerk, Sir G.	Patten, J. W.
Darby, G.	Pease, J.
Divett, E.	Pechell, Captain
Ellis, W.	Pendarves, E. W. W.
Evans, W.	Philips, M.
Gordon, R.	Philips, G. R.
Greg, R. H.	Pigot, right hon. D.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.	Plumptre, J. P.
Hastie, A.	Pryme, G.
Hawes, B.	Roche, Sir D.
Hayter, W. G.	Rundle, J.
Hector, C. J.	Scholefield, J.
Hindley, C.	Shaw, right hon. F.

Shirley, E. J.	Warburton, H.
Stock, Mr. Serjeant	Wilde, Sir T.
Style, Sir C.	Wood, C.
Thornely, T.	Wynn, rt. hon. C. W.
Villiers, hon. C. P.	TELLERS.
Walker, R.	Ainsworth, P.
Wallace, R.	Maule, hon. F.

Bill went through Committee.

House adjourned.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, June 8, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a first time:—*The Composition*.—Read a second time:—*Incumbents' Leasing*; *Ecclesiastical Corporations Leasing*; *Sugar Duties*.

**Petitions presented.** By Lord Hatherton, the Marquess of Lansdowne, Earl Fitzwilliam, the Earl of Minto, and Lord Brougham, from Staffordshire, Chipping, Wycombe, Huntingdonshire, Strougaer, Glasgow, Dewsbury, Jodburgh, Melrose, and other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earls of Haddington, Ripon, and Yarborough, and Lord Sondes, from Dublin, Lincolnshire, Kent, Sussex, and other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Earl Fitzwilliam, from Paisley, in favour of a system of Emigration; and from Sheffield, for the Abolition of Church Rates, and in favour of the Better Observance of the Sabbath.

**POOR-LAW APPOINTMENTS (IRELAND).]** The Marquess of Westmeath wished to know whether the noble Viscount opposite had any objection to the production of certain documents connected with a recent appointment of a very extraordinary nature in Ireland. He alluded to the appointment of a person named Robert O'Connor as returning officer of the Athlone Union, that individual having been heretofore tried for a capital offence, convicted, sentenced to death, and a day fixed for his execution. As he understood that the Poor Law Commissioners were acquainted with the fact of this man's conviction when they made the appointment, he was anxious to see the correspondence that had taken place on the subject. The noble Marquess moved for "a copy of the record of the conviction of Robert O'Connor, late serjeant in the 73d regiment, who was tried at the Roscommon July Assizes, 1836, for the abduction of Jane Matthews; a copy of his appointment to the situation of returning officer of the Athlone Union; and the correspondence with the Poor Law Commissioners on the subject of that appointment."

Viscount Duncannon had no objection to the production of the papers.

Motion agreed to.

**CORN-LAWS — PETITIONS — WAGES.]** Lord Ashburton presented sixty petitions from places in Somerset, Essex, Suffolk,

and Cumberland, against any alteration of the Corn-laws. One of these petitions from the eastern division of the county of Cumberland, signed by 3,000 landowners, farmers, bankers, and traders, strongly deprecated the agitation of this question at the present moment.

Lord *Cloncurry* would take that opportunity to state, in allusion to what had passed on the preceding evening relative to the wages of labourers in Ireland, that, from his own experience, he always found that when corn was high, wages fell, and that labourers were most happy and comfortable when corn was cheap.

Earl *Radnor* said, that on referring to documents, he found that the statements which he made last night on this subject, and which had been contradicted, were perfectly correct.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* begged leave to say that one of the noble Earl's statements was incorrect. The noble Earl said that labourers in Ireland obtained only fourpence a day for wages. Now, he (the Marquess of *Westmeath*) ventured to assert that the average wages of labourers was tenpence per day, besides which they enjoyed advantages as occupiers of land.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said that the wages he paid his labourers in Ireland never exceeded tenpence per day. As to the occupation of land by labourers, he did not think that was a good system. The labourers, generally, had a running account with their landlords, who were, in most instances, their employers also.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* was not prepared to contend that the system was beneficial to the country. On the contrary, he desired to see a class of pure labourers and a class of pure occupiers, as in England; but no one could deny, that, under the existing state of things, the labourer derived advantages from his occupancy of land, which ought to be taken into account when considering the question of wages.

The Earl of *Hardwicke* deprecated these incidental discussions on so great a question. They were extremely inconvenient, and their result generally appeared to be advantageous to the noble Lords who commenced them, because they came down to the House ready primed and loaded with figures and quotations, which it was quite impossible to refer to without referring to documents which were not at hand. That was the course pur-

sued last night by the noble Earl opposite (Earl *Radnor*), who read extracts from several documents in support of his assertions and arguments. One thing which the noble Earl stated was this, that the labourers did not think a high price of corn was advantageous to them. Their Lordships must admit, that the opinions of that class, if they could be obtained without the exercise of the influence of great landowners, would be of the greatest importance. Now it happened, very fortunately, that he was able to produce the opinions of the labourers on this point out of the mouth of the noble Earl. In 1836 the noble Earl was examined before a committee of the House of Commons, and was asked this question :—"Do you think it is the general impression among farmers that a rise in price would not be beneficial?" To which the noble Earl replied, "I think the impression among farmers is the other way—that a rise in price would be beneficial." The noble Earl was next asked, "Do the farmers think that if they could get 60s. a quarter for their grain they would be much better off?" and his answer was, "They do; and the labourers think so to." In answer to another question, the noble Earl said, "I know that in my part of the country the labourers are crying out for a rise in the price of bread: it is very absurd, I think; but that is their opinion." The noble Earl stated last night that the condition of the labourers was improved in 1836, owing to the low price of corn in that year. Upon this point, again, he must quote the noble Earl against himself. Before the same committee, the noble Earl said, "A great change in the condition of the labourer has taken place under the operation of the new Poor-law. It has improved their condition very rapidly indeed. Before the new law came into operation there was a great scarcity of work, but wherever it has been brought into operation, within my observation, there has been rather an outcry for labour than a deficiency of employment." Now, it must be apparent to the House that the noble Earl had, at different times, attributed the improvement in the condition of the labourer in 1836 to different causes.

The Earl of *Radnor* was glad that the noble Earl who had just sat down attached so much importance to his evidence. He did not deny, that, with respect to the condition of the labourer, much improvement

had taken place under the Poor-law Amendment Bill; but he still was of opinion that the situation of the labourer would not be rendered worse if he paid a low price for his bread. Nothing that the noble Earl had quoted did away with the positions which he (the Earl of Radnor) had advanced on the preceding evening. In his evidence he had merely stated the opinions of the labourers—but he did not think they were correct. They certainly entertained an opinion that a high price of corn was advantageous to them; and he could state what the reason was. Before the Poor-law Amendment Bill was passed, relief was given to the labourer in money, and the amount allowed was apportioned according to the price of bread. Therefore, when bread was very high in price the labourer received a much larger sum as relief than when the price of bread was low. In consequence the labourer connected in his mind a certain advantage with a high price of bread.

Lord Brougham presented a petition, which was respectably and numerously signed, and was agreed to at a meeting which had been held at Guildhall. This meeting had been called by public advertisement, and was held under the presiding care of the chief magistrate of this City. It was attended not only by persons of wealth and respectability in the commercial world—by those who held the highest rank in the estimation of their fellow citizens, but also by a most numerous body of the citizens of London generally. This petition was signed by upwards of 21,000 individuals in the course of four days only after the meeting had taken place, and he was informed that there would have been at least double that number if a longer time were allowed. The petitioners prayed for an alteration in the Corn-laws. The petition being a short one, he trusted he would be entitled to read it to the House. The noble Lord then read the petition, which prayed for the adoption of the propositions of her Majesty's Government with reference to a fixed duty upon corn. The noble Lord then said the petitioners only sought for the adoption of the fixed duty on the ground that it would be a stepping-stone to the repeal of all laws affecting the prices of the necessaries of life, which, they considered, were not proper objects for taxation, nor such as ought to suffer any duty for the sake of the revenue, and that a repeal of all those

laws, under such circumstances, would make this great measure of justice and policy safe for all parties; that this would be the true line for all wise lawgivers to take, and that this country expected its lawgivers would take such a course at the earliest possible period. The noble Lord then presented a petition from Portsoken Ward, signed by 700 or 800 persons, the prayer of which was to the same effect. He said that the petition had about double the number of signatures to any one which had ever before been sent from this place.

Lord Ashburton said, if he had understood the noble Lord right, he had stated, that the persons who had signed the first petition signified their disapproval of the measures of Government. Now, he had just read that petition, and he begged to say, that no such statement as that was contained therein. So far from this being the case, the petitioners distinctly state, that they highly approved of the measures of her Majesty's Government, and they prayed, that such measures might be, as rapidly as possible, carried into effect.

Lord Brougham said, there was not the slightest possibility of his falling into a mis-statement upon the subject, for he begged leave to remind the noble Lord, that he had read the petition at length—that he had read the whole of that petition, and then the prayer of it. The noble Lord had, it appeared, thought proper to read the petition a second time, but he did not object to his Lordship reading the petition a third time if he pleased. The petitioners had certainly stated what they prayed for, but he begged leave to inform their Lordships, that they expected a great deal more. With respect to the question itself, and in deference to the petitioners, he thought it his duty, after stating what they had simply asked in their petition, to add this, that they only asked for the adoption of that measure, but that it would prove a step, and an important step, to the further measure of total repeal. The gentlemen who had the management of this petition, had waited upon him, and in a conversation with them they unanimously concurred with him, that they would never be satisfied with a fixed duty, and that they only took this course with a view of laying the foundation for the total repeal of the Corn-laws. The petitioners, he was assured, looked for total repeal, but they wished to obtain what they considered would be more practicable. He

supposed they would have prayed for the total repeal of the Corn-laws, but that they were afraid of the opposition of the noble Lords opposite, and the noble Lord himself, who was not, perhaps, an advocate for a measure of a very fixed nature, but one of a more shifting character.

Lord *Ashburton* remarked, that his noble Friend had been pleased to allude to his (Lord *Ashburton's*) supposed change of opinion on the subject of the Corn-laws. He did not think, that charges of this nature were very fair at any time, and he was certainly astonished at their being made by his noble and learned Friend, as he recollected, that some years ago, when he strongly objected to further protection being extended to the agricultural interest, his noble and learned Friend was one of the most staunch and strenuous supporters in the House of Commons of protection, and he once advocated the further extension of it. He found his noble and learned Friend constantly opposed to him in his endeavours to prevent the further extension of protection.

Lord *Brougham* said, that the noble Lord must be confounding him with some other individual, for he begged to inform the noble Lord, that he was not at that period he mentioned, a Member of the House of Commons. He was out of Parliament in the years 1813, 1814, and 1815; indeed, from the year 1812 to 1816, he had never taken a part in any one of these debates which then took place in Parliament, for this simple reason, because he could not, not being a member of the legislative body. There could not be the slightest doubt of this fact. And he would further inform the noble Lord, that he never was in Parliament when any bill was passed or any proposition made with reference to this subject, wherein he had expressed himself differently to what he had that night said.

Lord *Ashburton* said, he could not be certain as to the particular year in which it took place; but he well recollected that upon some occasion, about the period he had mentioned, he (Lord *Ashburton*) had in debate taken the side of the question for the relaxation of the protective system, when his noble and learned Friend took the opposite side of the question, and made some severe remarks upon himself (Lord *Ashburton*) which, perhaps, was the reason of his so vividly recollecting the circumstance.

Lord *Brougham* said, it was obvious his noble Friend was under some mistake. The question to which his noble Friend, doubtless, intended to refer, was one which had no direct connection with the subject of the Corn-laws, namely, the bill introduced by the late Lord *Stanhope*, respecting the currency, in the year 1811. On that occasion, he certainly had to differ with his noble Friend on many matters of commercial import, but not directly bearing, as he recollected, on the Corn-laws.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* said, that the noble and learned Lord opposite having stated, on the authority of six gentlemen, that the parties who signed the petition were desirous of a total repeal of the Corn-laws, he (the Earl of *Winchilsea*) should like to know whether those gentlemen, being doubtless engaged in various commercial pursuits, would be satisfied at the same time to relinquish all the protective duties which related to their several branches of manufacture? He thought, that this would be but justice, as between the agricultural and the manufacturing interests. And yet, if this principle were to be adopted, and all the protective duties abolished, how, he asked, would the public creditor be paid, or the various necessary establishments of the country kept up? He really could not see how this great change could be effected without leading to the total annihilation of our national debt, and the destruction of every institution in the country.

Lord *Brougham* begged to call the attention of the noble Lord who had just spoken, to a petition which he had presented to the House about two years ago, and to what had passed upon that occasion. He did this for the purpose of showing the noble Lord how entirely the petitioners as well as he (Lord *Brougham*) were with him upon the subject of a total repeal of all duties affecting every necessary of life. That petition which he had alluded to, stated, that if the manufacturers of the country required the protection of agriculture to be repealed, the agriculturists, on the other hand, required the protection upon manufactures to be repealed also. He had the honour of presenting that petition, which was signed by a large number of individuals who represented the manufacturing and commercial interests of the country. This was, he thought, in the month of February, 1839. The peti-

tioners stated, that if the Legislature would assent to the proposition of the Corn-laws, being repealed, they would readily give up all the protecting duties affecting the manufacturers and other classes. But if any one should say, that this total repeal of the Corn-laws was to happen suddenly, and without due preparation, he begged to say, that such a proposition never came from those whose opinions he represented, nor from himself. He had always qualified his opinions upon the question, by noticing, that this repeal could only be satisfactorily effected by degrees and gradual stages. He had stated the real opinion of the petitioners, who signed the Guildhall petition, because he thought it would have reference to the motion of his noble Friend (Earl Fitzwilliam) as to the number of signatures which were attached to the petitions which had been presented for and against the question of repeal. He would now only state what the proportion of the petitioners was between those who supported the measure of a total repeal, and those who were in favour of a fixed duty. The total number of petitioners down to the last report which had been made to the House was as follows;—For total repeal, 650,000; for the proposed measure of Government, and no more, 15,000; against these propositions the number was 77,000. This was a proof that the great body of the people were in favour of a repeal of those laws, or an alteration in them.

Lord *Ashburton* thought the noble and learned Lord was not justified in saying that those engaged in the silk-trade would agree to have the protective duties in their favour abolished, if those in corn were also removed. He (Lord *Ashburton*) would remind his noble and learned Friend of a meeting for the repeal of the Corn-laws which took place a short time ago at Manchester, and at which Mr. Proctor, an extensive silk merchant, said, that he would forego his protective duty if the agriculturists would give up theirs; but upon being asked afterwards in the course of the same meeting whether he would adhere to that declaration, Mr. Proctor said—"Oh, I beg leave to withdraw that." The abolition of the protective duties was all well until it came to Mr. Proctor himself, and then he would beg leave to be excused. And so, no doubt, it would be with many others engaged in the silk trade. The noble and learned Lord seemed

also to attach too much importance to the numbers who had signed the petition he had just presented, or to the aggregate of petitioners he had stated; for in cities and in manufacturing towns it was but the work of a short time to collect a great number of signatures, and these should not be permitted to overwhelm the scattered population of the simple rural districts. Some important statistics connected with petitions seemed to have escaped his noble and learned Friend, while he had been sunning himself on the shores of the Mediterranean. Why, it was only the other night that a petition, signed by 1,300,000 persons, was presented in the other House, praying for the release of those who had become imprisoned for political offences. Yet, even then, it appeared that numbers did not avail.

Lord *Brougham* complained that his noble Friend was too hard. He (Lord *Brougham*) had merely stated the facts connected with the petition, and with petitions generally on this subject, abstaining carefully from going into the merits of the question, except in so far as that a fixed duty succeeding a sliding scale might be regarded as a stepping-stone to a complete abolition. Nor had he spoken, as authorised to say, that the silk traders would give up their protection if the agriculturists would yield theirs; what he did say was, that if the agriculturists were deprived of their protective duties, the people in the silk trade must lay it to their account to be deprived of their protection also upon the same principle. Nor did he think that he was altogether wrong in attaching much importance to a multitude of signatures to a petition, for even that petition, presented in the other House the other night, to which his noble Friend alluded, had had such respect paid to it that the prayer of the petitioners was as nearly as possible obtained.

The Earl of *Wicklow* thought that the noble and learned Lord opposite, had treated the Government rather unfairly on the present occasion. The petition which the noble and learned Lord this evening presented, was, he believed, the first which had been presented in their Lordships' House in favour of the Government views on the subject of the Corn-laws; and yet the noble and learned Lord made a statement which deprived the Government of the advantage of that petition.

The Marquess of *Lansdowne* said, that the noble Earl opposite, in his anxiety to do justice to her Majesty's Government, had done them rather an injustice, in stating that only one petition had been presented in support of their views on the subject of the Corn-laws. Several such petitions had been presented to their Lordships, of which he had presented one this evening.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* moved for a return of the number of petitions for and against the existing system of Corn-laws, and of those for and against the measures proposed by her Majesty's Government, classifying the petitioners, with an enumeration, as nearly as possible, of the number of petitioners of each class.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* moved, that there be added the number of signatures to which the residences of the subscribers were attached, and of the number of signatures written by the same persons.

The Earl of *Mountcashell*.—And of the number of marks.

Lord *Duncannon* had no objection to the return called for; but there would not be time enough to go into that minute analysis which the noble Lords desired.

The Earl of *Wicklow* thought, that without giving the number of signatures there might be a classification of the petitions. For his own part he should be glad to see that classification, and the country should know what was the proportion of petitions in favour of the Government proposition. The Government were about to go to the country on this particular point of the Corn-laws, and attempts would be made to show that these petitions were in favour of the Government measure. It was highly desirable that the country should be undeceived when a dissolution of Parliament was about to take place. If this were done a great benefit would be conferred on the country; and he, therefore, hoped that the noble Earl would persevere in his motion to that extent.

The Earl of *Radnor* called the attention of their Lordships to the unfairness of merely enumerating the petitions. They all knew that masses of petitions were presented in favour of the existing Corn-law, containing only four, or five, or six signatures; yet these numbers of petitions would tell against the fewer number of petitions with a contrary prayer, which, nevertheless, might contain several hundreds or several thousands of signatures.

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Earl *Stanhope* believed, that the enumeration of signatures would be quite impracticable to be made by Monday or Tuesday next, or before the dissolution of Parliament. He thought the noble Earl was altogether premature, because the current of opinion still continued to run on both sides the question, and it would be better to postpone this motion until the commencement of the next Session. True it was, that on the subject of the Poor-law Amendment Act there had been made, in the other House of Parliament, an enumeration of the petitions for and against that measure, and that the numbers praying for the repeal of that odious law were a thousand-fold greater than those in favour of it.

The Earl of *Radnor*.—What were the numbers?

Earl *Stanhope*.—I do not exactly know, but that was the result. The difference was enormous.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* contended it would not be fair to give merely the enumeration of the petitions, for there could be no doubt that those were more numerous which were in favour of the present Corn-laws.

The Earl of *Warwick* adverted to cases of petitions against the Corn-laws, in which boy's names, written all in one hand, were appended to them. If they proceeded on the give and take principle their Lordships would find it impossible to distinguish the *bond fide* from worthless signatures; and, therefore, great deductions must be made from the number of signatures.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, that proceeding was as likely to take place on one side as the other.

Viscount *Duncannon* said, that there would be no use in giving directions for a return which it was impossible to make.

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, that if it was impossible to comply with his motion, he would withdraw it.

Motion withdrawn.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, June 8, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Church Rates Abolition; Metropolis Improvements.—Read a second time:—Banks of Issue; Debts of Parishes.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Easthope, from a great many places in Worcestershire, Leicestershire, and Northamptonshire, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Leader,

Mr. Muntz, Mr. Brotherton, Mr. Hindley, Mr. Villiers, and several other hon. Members, from Yarmouth, Tower Hamlets, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Ashton-under-Lyne, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-Laws.—By Mr. Blount, Lord Stanley, Mr. G. Palmer, Sir Charles Burrell, Mr. Handley, and other hon. Members, from Essex, Gloucester, Monmouth, and a great many other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. A. Sanford, from places in Somersetshire, for the Abolition of Church Rates.—By Mr. T. Duncombe, from certain parties, for Inquiry into Outrages committed at a Public Meeting held at Manchester, for the Release of all Prisoners for Political Offences, and for the adoption of the People's Charter; and from Weymouth, that Clergymen, for the future, be not put upon the Commission of the Peace.—By Lords Clements, and Castlereagh, from Leitrim, and Down, against Lay Patronage in the Church of Scotland.

**TURNPIKE TRUSTS.]** Mr. Mackinnon inquired whether it was the intention of the noble Lord, the Secretary of the Home Department to found any measure on the report of the commission on turnpike trusts?

Mr. F. Maule had already explained on a former occasion, that it was the intention of the Government to frame a bill on the report in question, but not to press it beyond a second reading, in order that those interested, and the public generally, might have an opportunity of considering its provisions.

**MUNICIPAL ELECTORS.]** Mr. Baines wished to call the attention of the Government to the introduction of a bill for the regulation of the registration in municipal corporations. In Leeds and Liverpool recourse was obliged to be had last year to the registration of the preceding year.

The Attorney-General said, at the present advanced period of the Session, it was not the intention of Government to introduce any measure for the regulation of the registration of electors in municipal corporations. The difficulties that had recently occurred at Leeds and Liverpool had been, in his opinion, the result of accident, and were not likely to occur again.

**CORN-LAWS—CITY PETITION.]** The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. G. Palmer) had, on the preceding day, put to him some questions relative to a petition against the Corn-laws lying for signature at the Excise Office. He (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) had assured the hon. Member that he would make an inquiry into the matter. He had done so, and the result appeared to be this:—On the destruction of the Royal Exchange, the merchants of

London had applied to the commissioners of the Treasury for permission to use one of the great courts of the Excise as a temporary place of business. Permission was of course given, and they dealt with the court in all cases as they had been accustomed to deal with the Royal Exchange. It appeared undoubtedly, that without any knowledge whatever of the commissioners, or any application to the commissioners, there had been a petition lying at the court now employed as the Royal Exchange. He was bound to state, that when the commissioners were applied to some time ago by the Lord Mayor of London, to know whether there was any objection on their part to let a petition relative to the Post-Office lie for signature at the court already alluded to, the answer was, that they had no objection—that the merchants of London should be allowed to use the place in the same manner as accustomed to use the Royal Exchange. On the present occasion he apprehended, that the same course had been pursued as on the former one. He trusted, that this explanation was satisfactory.

Mr. George Palmer said, that he was one of the members of the Gresham committee, and he thought it possible that the proceedings might have been sanctioned by one of the officers of that committee, and he therefore felt it his duty to ask the man whom he saw, not in the court appropriated to the merchants, but on the stairs at the top of the court, by whose permission he stood there with the petition, and the answer was, by permission of the commissioners of Excise.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, he had not entered into particular details, and it was quite true, that the petition was placed on a desk at the side of the stairs, but then it was a desk at which the merchants were in the habit of doing business. That was the explanation which had been given him by the parties to whom he applied. If, however, the hon. Gentleman should make inquiries, and acquire further information, perhaps he would be good enough to communicate it to the House.

**BILLS POSTPONED.]** Mr. Pakington intimated that it was not his intention to proceed with the County Coroners Bill.

**IRISH CHANCERY.]** In answer to Mr. Litton,

Viscount *Morpeth* said the Attorney-general for Ireland did not intend to proceed with the Irish Chancery Bill, if it appeared likely to be opposed.

**MEDICAL PROFESSION.]** Mr. *Hawes* said he should not proceed with his bill for the regulation of the medical profession.

Lord *J. Russell* said, it was not the intention of the Government to proceed with the following measures:—the Factories Bill; the Silk Factories Bill; the County Courts Bill; the Bankruptcy, Insolvency, and Lunacy Bill; the Registration of Voters (Scotland) Bill; the Boroughs' Improvement Bill; Buildings Regulation Bill; Royal Burghs (Scotland) Bill, and Drainage of Towns Bill. It was, however, intended to proceed with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners Bill; the Bribery at Elections Bill; the New South Wales, &c. Bill; the Western Australia Bill; and the Administration of Justice Bill.

**REGISTER OF ELECTORS—HERTFORDSHIRE.]** The Order of the Day was read for the attendance of the clerk of the peace for the county of Hertford.

Mr. *Storey*, the clerk of the peace of Hertford was called to the Bar. He was asked by the Speaker whether he had a copy of the register of electors for the county of Hertford? He replied that he had a copy, but submitted that he ought not to be called upon to part with it, as it belonged to the magistrates, who had paid for it, and if he gave it up there would be no other copy to furnish to those electors who might apply for it.

The clerk of the peace was then ordered to withdraw, and was retiring carrying off the copy of the register with him. He was stopped, and ordered by the Speaker to deposit the copy at the Bar until the House should decide what should be done with it.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* said, that there could be no doubt that the clerk of the peace was bound to return a copy of the register, according to the words of the Reform Act. He considered, that the House had been trifled with, the return not having been made to the House by the clerk of the peace, conformably to the order served upon him. He recommended the House to leave the clerk of the peace to settle this matter with the magistrates as he

best could. He, as an elector of the county of Hertford, wanted a copy of the register; and it was an infringement of the rights of the electors of that county, that they had not been able to procure it before now. It was for the House to say, whether it would have its order obeyed or not. He should, therefore, move that the copy of the register of the electors of the county of Hertford, deposited at the Bar by the clerk of the peace, should be forthwith laid upon the Table of the House.

Mr. *Estcourt* wished to offer to the House a few reasons why this copy should not be laid on the Table of the House, and why it should not be taken from the clerk of the peace, in whose custody it was. He was satisfied, that the Order of the House had not been obeyed; but the refusal of the clerk of the peace to obey it arose from a misapprehension of duty on his part. The magistrates of the county of Hertford had decided several times, that the copy of the register should not be printed; and it was, therefore, too much to say, that the clerk of the peace, who was only the servant of the magistrates, should have it printed. If you insist on this copy being laid on the Table, you must take it from the clerk of the peace, and he was bound to have it in his custody in order to supply the electors with a copy of it, either written or printed, at a reasonable price. He would not have objected to the motion had it been that the clerk of the peace should produce another copy of the register within a week, or any other reasonable time; but it was not consistent with the practice of the House to take a legal document from the legal officer in whose custody it legally was. He was not aware of a single instance in which that had ever been done.

Mr. *Cowper* said, he had no personal feeling against the clerk of the peace, but the question was, whether the Commons would support its privileges or not, as there was no doubt, that the conduct of the clerk of the peace was an evasion of its order.

The *Solicitor-General* said, he did not mean to impute to the individual who had been at the Bar a wilful contravention of the order of the House, but the course which he had taken was certainly not the most consistent with that respect to which the House was entitled. He agreed in



thinking, that it would not be expedient to take this copy from the custody of the person who had been called to the Bar, but he submitted, that the House might call upon that person forthwith to furnish the House with a copy. He was glad, that attention had been called to this subject, for there certainly had been an evasion of the orders of the House, and that under circumstances which might be in the highest degree inconvenient. According to the regulations made by the Reform Act, it was the clear imperative duty of the clerk of the peace—so soon as the revised list assumed the character of the register by being returned to the sheriff in a complete and proper form—to furnish any person who applied with a copy, of course within a reasonable time. These copies might be either printed or written, the object of that regulation being, probably, that where there was not an extensive demand for copies, they might be made at less expense by being written. Now, the individual who had appeared at the Bar, must have known, as an old practitioner, that it was his duty to be in a situation to furnish copies to any person who was willing to pay for them. He said, that he could only furnish the House with a copy of a copy, and yet he kept that very paper for the purpose of furnishing copies from it. From the 28th of March to the 8th of June, that House had been struggling to get a copy, which ought to have been ready at the first demand. Unless they manifested a strong impression on the subject, it was not likely, that they would be able to get a copy until the election takes place. For all the duties performed by the clerk of the peace in carrying into effect the Reform Act, he was to be paid by the treasurer of the county, and any sums he might receive for copies of the register, he was to account for to the county; he had, therefore, no interest in the question, except as regarded the due discharge of his duties. The present case appeared to him (the Solicitor-general) to be clearly an evasion of the Reform Act. The House would observe, that a fund is created to meet the charges which attend the register and the matters connected with it, and every county elector is, for that purpose required to pay a shilling at the time he claims to be registered; and in this case he thought the number of electors amounted to several thousands, and, therefore, the aggregate

of these shillings formed a considerable sum, but it was a little extraordinary, that the fund created by the payment of this shilling was not made applicable to the purpose, and that it was paid to the overseers of parishes, and formed part of the poor-rate fund. As far as the electors were concerned, they paid their contributions towards the expense of furnishing the register by this payment of one shilling; and, inasmuch, as the representation concerned the interest of the country, the expense of preparing the register connected with counties was thrown upon the country. Now, the party who was lately at the Bar of this House had no excuse whatever for not supplying a copy, in respect to payment. It was his duty to make the copies, and though it was also his duty to receive payment from the electors for them, that payment was not on his own account or applicable to his own purposes, but was to be accounted for to the treasurer. And what excuse had he for not now being in possession, if he were not in possession, of the means of furnishing a copy? How could this House—the representative of the people—receive an answer from a public officer, charged with a matter so important to the representation of this House as the furnishing a copy of the register of electors—a statutable duty, imposed without condition—how could this House, when it called for a copy many months after the period when a copy ought to be ready, receive any excuse for that copy not being furnished. He thought the clerk of the peace must have been acting under a great delusion, when, having provided himself with a copy of the register, the House of Commons required a copy, he sent word, "I have it not, it is in the sheriff's keeping;" and then, when an order was served on the sheriff, the undersheriff wrote an answer, not disrespectful in its terms it was true, "I want to know who is to pay me for it." [*hear.*] A Gentleman said "hear," he meant to say it was not a fit principle to lay down, that if this House declared it to be necessary for public purposes to call for a copy of a document, it should receive as an answer, "who is to pay for it?" He hoped the House had too high a sense of justice, when it required a document which put a party to expense in furnishing, to allow that party to suffer any pecuniary loss in doing the duty of the House

to procure these documents which the public interest required, and he should hope that any public officer who was called on to render a copy of a document would see that the proper course was to obey the call, and to state to the House that, obedient to its order, the act was done, but that the party had incurred certain expenses for which he had had no remuneration. The sheriff of a county was to be paid for the performance of certain duties under the Reform Bill as well as the clerk of the peace, but he did not conceive that his furnishing a copy of the register would be working out the provisions of the Reform Act, or that he would have any claim upon the county treasurer for remuneration. It appeared to him, that the clerk of the peace ought to have furnished the copy, that his omission to do so was at the peril of the displeasure of this House, and that, having had abundant time for the purpose, he should now be required to deliver a copy forthwith. With regard to the expense of supplying copies to the electors, did the House think it was ever intended that 30*l.* or 40*l.* should be asked for a copy of a register? But it was said the magistrates of the county of Hertford had directed it not to be printed. Why, they had no discretion whatever on the subject. The act of Parliament did not put it in the discretion of magistrates: the act selected the clerk of the peace as a public officer, to furnish written or printed copies. It was true that the printing might occasion an expense that would not be returned by the number of copies that would be sold. But whether that were so or not, he trusted the House would take care to enable the electors of the county of Hertford to obtain a copy of the register, at a reasonable charge. He begged to move as an amendment, that Mr. Storey be directed to furnish this House with a copy of the register of electors for the county of Hertford, on Thursday next.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* said he was quite disposed to concur in the opinion of the learned Solicitor-general. He did not think that the laying a copy of the register on the table of this House would of itself be of much consequence, but he thought it might hold out an inducement to other counties not to comply with the directions of the Reform Act, but to look to the order of the House for supplying a printed copy. With respect to the question that the number of copies to be sold

was not likely to defray the expense of printing, there was scarcely a county in England, with the exception of York, in which the copies sold met the expense of preparing them, and in every county with which he was acquainted there was always a charge for printing the register, and which was regularly allowed by the magistrates in the treasurer's accounts. After the authority of the House had been so far vindicated as to have its order complied with, he thought the most convenient course would be to re-deliver the copy to the clerk of the peace, and that he should be admonished that it was his duty forthwith, with all possible dispatch, to provide himself with a sufficient number of copies to answer the demands of the county.

Sir *R. Inglis* said, that he could not concur in what had fallen from his right hon. Friend the Member for Montgomeryshire, because, according to the statement of the party at the bar, the document was not his, and, being the document of others, of the magistrates, it would be clearly unjust to require him to give it up. He hoped that the House would not exercise so arbitrary a power, and particularly as the object intended might be obtained by other means. If the course proposed were taken, the effect would be to relieve the counties of the expense of printing those registries, and throwing the burden on the country generally. He, therefore, should suggest whether it would not be better to order a copy to be delivered by the clerk of the peace within forty-eight hours.

Mr. *Williams Wynn*, in explanation, denied that the registry was the property of individuals, and said, on the contrary, that it was a matter of record, and should be accessible to those of the public who might require copies.

Mr. *C. Wood* agreed that they were entitled to have the registry produced laid upon the Table, and it would be setting aside the Reform Act if this record were not accessible to the public.

Sir *E. Sugden* said there could be no doubt that the clerk of the peace should have provided himself with written or printed copies, to be delivered on reasonable terms to the electors applying for them; and sure he was, that when the Reform Act was before the House it was never contemplated that such an amount of charge as was now required should be made for the copy of the registry. He

had no objection to this document being laid on the Table of the House, in order to afford them an opportunity to inform the clerks of the peace generally what was their duty; but with respect to any motion for having it laid on the Table and printed, all he could say was, that he should oppose such a motion. If the course which he pointed out were adopted, the copy would no doubt be forthwith furnished, and the difficulty got rid of.

**Sir R. Peel** thought the better course for the House to pursue was that which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor-general had pointed out. This was not a case in which it was necessary to vindicate their privileges, and, therefore, what they should do was to call this officer back to the Bar, and tell him that the House insisted on his furnishing the copy required by a given day, and would enforce obedience to their order if it were not ready at the appointed time. This was what he recommended at present; but if any difficulty existed on the subject, the better way would be in the next Session to have a committee of inquiry appointed on the subject.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* approved of the amendment of the Solicitor-general, and withdrew his motion.

Mr. Storey was then called to the Bar, and the Speaker said, "In obedience to the orders of the House, I have to direct you forthwith to cause a copy of the register of electors of the county of Hertford to be made, and to present the same to this House on Thursday next."

Mr. Storey said, that he would cause a copy to be made, but he believed it would be quite impossible that it should be presented on Thursday. He thought it would take three weeks.

Sir *E. Sugden* asked, whether if a law-stationer divided the copy amongst several persons, it could not be made in a shorter time?

Mr. Storey said it would depend upon the number of hands employed.

**Witness withdrew.**

The Attorney-General said, he was at first inclined to feel favourable towards the witness ; but he thought it was quite evident that he was now acting contumaciously towards the House. No one could doubt that the copy could be prepared within twenty-four hours, or within half that time ; and he, therefore, was of opinion, that the House should insist upon

copy being produced within the time mentioned.

Mr. Estcourt thought it would be more consistent with the dignity of the House to fix the time when the copy should be produced; and not to ask the witness any opinion upon the subject.

The Speaker said he would direct the clerk to put a copy of the order into the witness's hands, to produce the copy ordered by Thursday next.

**Order above made to be enforced.**

**BRIBERY AT ST. ALBAN'S.] Mr. Williams Wynn** rose to move, that the Attorney-general be instructed to prosecute Mr. Richard Webster, for bribery at the last St. Alban's election. He said, that the facts lay in so narrow a compass, that it would not be necessary for him to trouble the House at any length. He did not wish this question to be mixed up with the general subject of the bribery laws, but to stand upon its own merits, and to be decided upon the evidence taken before the committee which had been printed, and was in the hands of Members. He was anxious, that the charge contained in that evidence against Mr. Richard Webster, should be placed in a course of judicial investigation. Two witnesses, of the names of Adams and Stebbings, had sworn, that Mr. Webster, not in the presence of each other, had given them 12*l.* each, for their votes in favour of the sitting Member. It might be said, that the testimony of Adams and Stebbings was not to be trusted, but what they had deposed, had been confirmed by a clergyman upon the hustings, who had stated, that Adams came upon the hustings, and put a small paper parcel into the hands of the mayor, which was found to contain two five-pound notes and two sovereigns. Being asked whence he procured it, Adams answered, that it had been given to him to vote for Lord Listowel, by Mr. Webster, who was then standing in the crowd. Adams pointed him out, and Mr. Webster's answer was, "Well, what of that? the other side are just as bad." Upon this evidence he contended, that the House was bound to proceed, unless it was meant to be held out to the world, that although the House passed laws against bribery they might be violated with impunity. It ought to be recollected

tion and influence, whose example might be most prejudicial. Mr. Webster had himself brought Lord Listowel down to St. Alban's, and had boasted, that he had procured the return of nine out of ten candidates, whom he had previously introduced and supported. He had, besides, proposed the sitting Member at the hustings, and had subsequently paraded the streets in his company. He wished to avoid all remarks upon the conduct of the committee which had tried the merits of the election; they had decided, that there was no proof of agency, possibly, for the very natural reason, that Mr. Webster was, in fact, the principal, and that the candidate was the agent in his hands. It seemed to him, under all the circumstances, that it was the bounden duty of the House to make this offender an example, if when the opportunity was given him, he was not able to rebut the accusation. Looking at the evidence, he would ask any Member who had read it, whether, if acting as a grand juror, he should not be decidedly of opinion, that the case ought to be tried? In answer, it might be said, as indeed he had heard it said, "Why do you not also look at the case of Walsall?" His answer was twofold—first, that if fifty persons had been guilty at Walsall, it did not show, that Mr. Webster had not been guilty at St. Alban's; and, secondly, that the offence at Walsall, was treating, which rendered an election void, but was not a punishable offence. It had also been urged, that Mr. Webster might be made the object of a private *qui tam* action for the penalties; but he thought the House would neglect the part it ought, for the sake of public example, to take, if it passed over this instance of bribery in that manner. He moved, that the Attorney-general be instructed to prosecute Mr. R. Webster, for bribery, at the last election for St. Alban's.

Mr. Sanford said, as the Chairman of the late St. Alban's Election Committee, he would offer a few observations on the motion of the right hon. Gentleman, and in doing so, he would not throw any impediment in the way of the motion. He would leave it to the House, and to those who had heard the evidence, to raise that opposition. He would state to the House the impression which the evidence had made upon his mind, and before doing so, he would refer to the fact of the evidence

having been printed, and having been laid upon the Table of the House. He would refer to what took place on the last day of the sitting of the committee. The special report was drawn up by himself, and was in much stronger terms than the report presented, having been afterwards corrected and modified, and it was agreed that the Chairman should be instructed to lay the minutes of the proceedings upon the Table of the House. His (Mr. Sanford's) impression certainly at first was that a further consideration of the evidence should take place, and that after, such charges had been made against Dr. Webster by the two witnesses Adams and Stebbings, the doctor should have an opportunity of rebutting them if he could. With regard to the question brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman, and considering evidence as a jurymen, if he (Mr. Sanford) were asked to say whether it proved Dr. Webster to be guilty of bribery, he should reply, that it did not. He would observe to the House, that before instructing the law-officers of the Crown to prosecute a party for bribery, they should be thoroughly convinced, that they could obtain a verdict. He had at first intended not to take any part in this discussion; but, as he considered, that the House would not be acting rightly in attempting to institute a prosecution unless they were satisfied they could carry it to a successful issue, he wished to say, that he did not think the evidence adduced before the committee sufficient to secure a conviction. He trusted the House would give him credit for wishing to carry the investigation to its fullest extent—to have the whole matter thoroughly sifted. If hon. Gentlemen wished to examine the manner in which his votes had been given in the committee, they would see, that his anxiety was, to carry that investigation to its utmost limits. The question at this moment was, whether there was sufficient evidence given before the committee to justify them in directing the Attorney-general to prosecute. It was not merely to what was written down, but to the manner in which the evidence was given that they should look. He had had an opportunity of seeing the manner in which that evidence was given. He did not like to make use of a strong expression, but he must confess, that it was the manner in which that evidence was given, that led him to doubt whether the House would be justi-

fied in directing this prosecution. He did not like to throw a damper on prosecutions of this nature, but he thought, if they were to prosecute for bribery, they ought also to do something against treating, which was the same as bribery in act, *in animus* in criminality—in short, in everything except the penalties attached to it. He begged pardon of the House for having offered an opinion on a question of this nature, and would again call on them to consider, if Dr. Webster should be acquitted, what would be its moral effect on the character of their proceedings.

Mr. *Blackstone* had two objects in view when he moved for the printing of the evidence taken before this committee; one was, that the country might see it, and the public be satisfied with the decision of that committee; and the other was, to test whether the House would permit such scenes, carried on in open day, to be left uninvestigated. He avowed, that his wish would have been to have had a committee appointed to investigate the whole case; but when he saw the state of the public business, and the difficulty there was of obtaining the attendance of Members on the committee, he had given up the idea of moving further in the matter. Yet, as the right hon. Gentleman had made the present motion, he would lend it his support, and he would remind the House, that in the Ipswich case, on which he had sat, there was but one case of bribery distinctly proved, and for that six men, including the most respectable town-clerk, Mr. Sparrow, were sent to Newgate, compared with which a prosecution by the Attorney-general was very slight. He had always deprecated any vindictive course towards any individual, but the present appeared a case that required notice.

Mr. *Charles Buller* would shortly state why he, on very general grounds, objected to the present motion. He would not willingly set up precedents to stop the great ends of justice, and he was so anxious to stop bribery, that he would be willing to hold up individuals, *in terrorem*, but if the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in his present motion, he would establish a large precedent for the prosecution of bribery, contrary to all the principles of justice. He considered, that if the House of Commons ordered a prosecution, it was a very strong measure, and it was the strongest stigma, that

on an individual. The House of Commons should only do so on good grounds, it was dangerous for an individual to form an opinion upon what were good grounds. He had asked the right hon. Gentleman before he came into the House whether there were any precedents in which the House of Commons had ordered the prosecution of any individual except on the report of a committee. In those cases in which there had been a report of a committee, the House had ordered the prosecution of certain parties; but it was rather dangerous to trust to individual opinions as to whether the grounds were good. The *prima facie* case might appear to the right hon. Gentleman to be strong against Dr. Webster, but that was the mere individual opinion of a Member of that House, and it was against the opinion of the committee. They who had heard the evidence, and who had seen the manner of the witnesses, were of opinion, that there was not a good ground for prosecution, and if any proceedings were to be instituted, the cutting short of the proceedings of the St. Alban's Committee, was an act of monstrous injustice towards Dr. Webster. He was no party to that step. On cross-examination, too, it was proved, that one witness was rather out of his mind, and that the other went by the rather unpleasant name of "Lying Adams." The counsel for the sitting Member had other direct evidence to produce to shake the testimony of these witnesses, and without giving these persons any opportunity of offering any explanation, the House was called upon, on an *ex parte* case to order a prosecution against the opinion of the committee. If they were to go by the report of a committee, at least let them not go upon the report of a committee, that had only heard one side. The other reasons which the right hon. Gentleman had assigned for his motion, the failure of private remedies for bribery, only led to the conclusion that the general law of bribery ought to be made more effectual. He trusted, therefore, that the House would not do an act of injustice to Dr. Webster, and establish a dangerous precedent.

Mr. *Mackenzie* said, that he was at the Verulam Arms during the election, and around the House, that Adams gave the statement there, when he brought the matter did afterwards to the committee.

too, went to Dr. Webster's house, got the money, and then called at the Verulam Arms, telling the same story. He did not think, that the cross-examination showed any great discrepancy in their evidence; but, at any rate, there had been no contradiction of the clergyman, who heard Dr. Webster on the hustings make what he conceived to be a distinct admission of the fact. Either Dr. Webster had a justification or he had not. If he had a justification, he would only suffer inconvenience for a short time, and if he had no justification, he had been guilty of gross bribery, and ought to be punished.

Mr. *Mildmay*, as a member of the committee, must say, that not only the manner of the witnesses, but the actual evidence of Stebbing, was against him: there was a contradiction to other witnesses. And with respect to the other witness, making every allowance for him, and admitting that there was nothing in Adams's evidence to shake his testimony, he appeared to be a loose kind of man. There was another circumstance, too, that weighed with him; it was the statement of the counsel for the petitioner, Mr. Hildyard, in his opening, that this was an election trick, and that the money was given by one party to catch the other. [Mr. *Wynn*: The speeches of counsel were not printed.] That was an advantage he had over the right hon. Gentleman; he had heard the speeches and the evidence, and he assured the right hon. Gentleman that the blue book would not afford him half the information that the blue countenance of the man would have given him. Again, he did not think that he would have been perfectly justified in marking any opinion with respect to the evidence, when the person accused had had no opportunity of making a reply; the other party had stopped the proceedings just at the very moment when Dr. Webster could have begun his defence. When, therefore, it became a question as to the propriety of presenting the evidence to the House, he had thought what had Dr. Webster been accused of doing? He was said to be guilty of bribery. Had it been proved? Two witnesses had appeared before the committee and had given evidence. Had Dr. Webster had an opportunity of vindicating himself? Had he done so? No. And why? Because at the very point when the counsel

for the petitioners had raised the evidence to the point he wanted, without giving Dr. Webster any opportunity of defending himself, the counsel withdrew the case. Dr. Webster could not, therefore, take any steps to vindicate himself; though, if he had had an opportunity, and had not done so, he would have been willing to join the committee. When, therefore, there was a question whether the committee should report the evidence to the House, he had asked himself these questions, and he had also inquired whether the House had usually prosecuted in these cases? He had investigated the journals, and he did not find a single one. There had been cases brought before them in which there had been distinct reports of bribery, in Ludlow and Cambridge. Did the House punish the parties? They had had the whole case before them, and they had not prosecuted; and here they sought to punish when they had only half a case. These were the reasons which induced him not to wish for the success of the present motion. It might be the last act of his political life, and he would not so condemn himself in the eyes of the country as to allow men to escape punishment who were convicted before committees, and to prosecute one who was only accused upon half a case. He would walk out of the House and would not give a vote upon the present motion, because he had been a member of the committee; but he left the case in the hands of the House, in the perfect conviction, that if the House did prosecute upon half a case, they would go before the country as one of the most unjust assemblies that had ever sat.

Colonel *Conolly* said, that if this were the last act of his political life, he would vote in favour of the present motion; for he defied the annals of Parliament to find such a case of corruption as the present; and he was glad that the motion had been taken up by a person of such experience as the right hon. Gentleman. He thought, that the character of that House with the country, greatly depended in its punishing guilt in every quarter. The frightful dexterity with which bribery was now carried on, the parties keeping clear of punishment, was a consideration which ought to weigh with the House to induce them to follow with punishment delinquency that was so palpable. The very dexterity ought to be an additional reason for the prose-

oution. He said in the face of an expiring Parliament, that bribery had become a perfect trade. Persons learnt how to bribe without being discovered, and how to destroy the links of evidence between the briber and the candidate; thus defeating Parliament, frustrating justice, and leaving the delinquency unpunished. He called upon the House then, in the face of a staring dissolution, to let the country see who would record his vote in favour of not prosecuting in such a case as this, merely because the whole case had not been proved in all its parts before the committee. The country would look upon every one who voted against the present motion as an abettor of corruption.

Mr. *Mildmay* explained, that it was his intention to have moved, by way of amendment, that the Attorney-general be instructed to prosecute the agents of the hon. Manners Sutton, who had been "proved before a committee of that House to have been guilty" of bribery, and that he be further instructed to prosecute Dr. Webster, who had been "accused" of bribery; but he had thought it better as a Member of the committee, not to vote.

Mr. *Warburton* thought, that the hon. Member for Winchester, Mr. *Mildmay*, had sufficiently proved, that they ought not to be guilty of the inconsistency of prosecuting in a case in which there was no special report, when in the cases of Ludlow and Cambridge, in which there had been a special report, they had omitted to prosecute. He recollected, that when the bill of the right hon. Baronet (Sir R. Peel) was before the House, he had pointed out the omission in not giving the committees power to proceed and sift every case to the bottom, notwithstanding compromises of the parties in order to stop evidence. He (Mr. Warburton) would not be afraid of voting against the present motion, notwithstanding the threat of the vengeance of his constituents held out by the gallant colonel. For what was the object of punishment? To prevent the commission of crime. Now the present law had existed during the whole of this Parliament, and for a long time previously, and yet the gallant colonel admitted, that the practice of bribery was so common, that it had been reduced to a complete system of trade; and that the parties principally concerned, had contrived to escape un-

scathed, whilst the whole of the punishment had fallen on the less culpable agent. Would that prevent crime? Was not the only object of punishment to prevent crime? Yet, with all the means of punishment in their hands, did any one believe, that if they were to prosecute Dr. Webster, they would diminish bribery at any one election that was to take place? It was folly to conduct a prosecution without the legitimate aim and end being answered. If they believed, that bribery would be prevented by such prosecutions, let them be instituted. But they would not have the measure of the ballot, the only effectual means of preventing bribery, nor any other measure that would really tend to carry out that object. ["*Laughter.*"] Hon Members might laugh, but they would preserve small constituencies and open voting, the most certain means of encouraging bribery; while by way of making a parade of purity of election, they would order a few casual prosecutions, knowing they would not have the smallest effect in preventing the practice of bribery. He (Mr. Warburton), objected on principle to any prosecutions of the kind, knowing they would not answer the purpose that was sought to be effected.

Mr. *Dugdale* was bound to say, that when he found a witness had sworn he had received a sum of money from Dr. Webster, and when he found that Dr. Webster had openly said, "Never mind, they have done just as bad on the other side," he could come to no other conclusion than that Dr. Webster had been guilty of bribery. It appeared by the evidence before the committee, that Dr. Webster, in his speech introducing the noble candidate, had said he had brought in ten or eleven candidates for the borough, and had carried all with the exception of one. He thought it desirable, that special notice should be taken of the present case, particularly before the general election, in order that the borough of St. Alban's might have the opportunity of wiping out the stain that rested upon it, and he would, therefore, vote for the motion.

Mr. *Ward* said, if this practice had prevailed in the borough of St. Alban's for so long a time as the hon. Member who had just sat down had stated, the advantage had not been confined to one party only, for he believed that he (Mr. Ward) was the first liberal Member who had represented St. Alban's of late years.

It was true that he had been introduced to the electors of that borough by Dr. Webster. According to the statement of the hon. Member (Mr. Dugdale) bribery was a very ancient practice in the borough. With respect to the motion he would say, that if a clear case was made out, he would be the last person to vote against it. He knew, that the plague spot of bribery was creeping through the small boroughs, and it was gross hypocrisy on both sides of the House to pretend to condemn it, when at the same time they refused on taking their seats to make a declaration, that they had not by themselves or their agents been guilty of bribery. In all the arrangements for the coming elections, notwithstanding all their condemnation of bribery, hon. Members would not scruple to do the same thing. It was well known, that there was scarcely an election at which, in some shape or other, bribery did not take place. Why, then, should they select this particular place for punishment? They were now making preparations for the coming election, and were they not making preparations to bribe the electors? Why, was it not well known, that money was the thing which they all sought for? But he did not rest his opposition to the motion on this ground, but on the incompleteness of the evidence adduced before the committee, and upon the fact that the inquiry had been interrupted and cut short, without any opportunity having been given to the accused party to defend himself. He also opposed the motion upon the statement made by the hon. Member for Winchester, that in two previous cases where bribery had been proved, and brought home to certain parties, the constitutional zeal of the right hon. Member for Monmouth had not burned so brightly as in the present case, and the guilty parties had been allowed to escape without prosecution. But in this case, where the accused party had had no opportunity of making his defence, the right hon. Baronet called upon the House to assume a *prima facie* case of guilt, and to direct the Attorney-general to prosecute. They might as well prosecute a man on a newspaper report; and he believed it had been stated by an hon. Member who represented Ipswich, and the statement had been published in a newspaper, that he declined to stand again for that borough on account of the exorbitant demands that were made upon him by his constituents

after all legitimate claims had been paid. Here, then, was a man confirming his own guilt, and would they, in that case, propose to institute a prosecution? There were better modes of protecting the character of the House than by instituting these prosecutions; they must begin amongst themselves.

Sir R. Inglis said, they were not going to punish Dr. Webster, to fine, or imprison him; they were going to send him to trial; and he asked the hon. Member, and the hon. and learned Judge, whether they had ever met a grand jury, and heard them charged from the bench. They were told that the question was not whether the parties accused were guilty, but whether there was *prima facie* evidence of their guilt. The question for the House was whether or not a *prima facie* case had been made out—whether there was sufficient evidence of guilt to justify them in sending the accused party to trial. The resolution before the House did not condemn Dr. Webster—there was no question of his guilt or innocence before them. The only question which they were called upon to determine was this—did the blue book then before them afford sufficient evidence to warrant their sending Dr. Webster before the tribunals of the country; Now, he was one of those who entertained the opinion that a *prima facie* case had been made out. The House would recollect that the cross-examination before the committee had proceeded in that case to an extent rarely exceeded, and that a very large body of evidence had been obtained; nevertheless Dr. Webster had not been placed upon his trial—he was not on trial before the committee, neither was he on trial before the House; but the proceedings would still be watched with much anxiety, and, whatever might be the decision of the House, he did not hesitate to say, that he believed, the decision of the country would not be favourable to the purity of Dr. Webster; and he further contended that the power of the Attorney-general could alone impart the proper direction to that opinion. Nothing but an authoritative prosecution by the Attorney-general could insure the attaining the justice of the case. In his opinion no reason against proceeding in the present case could be derived from the circumstance that in other cases, alleged to be similar, no prosecutions had been instituted. There was nothing to prevent these cases being



brought forward whenever any hon. Member thought proper. Let Ludlow, Cambridge, or Walsall be brought under the consideration of the House, and he took upon himself to say, that the matter would be immediately taken up. Because other Members had neglected their duty, that circumstance formed no reason why the mover of the present resolution should neglect his, now that a specific instance of bribery had been brought forward. The House would not allow such an instance to pass unnoticed, if they wished to maintain their character with the people of England. It appeared to him that they had the duties of grand jurors to discharge, and that on the present occasion especially they ought not to shrink from an effectual fulfilment of it.

Sir C. Grey said, that everybody was agreed upon the necessity of having a fixed rule on these occasions. Bribery was a crime that might be prosecuted by private individuals. If a prosecution was so brought forward without sufficient grounds, the accused party would have his remedy for a malicious prosecution. But would that be the case when a prosecution was ordered by a branch of the Legislature? In the first place, the House acted without responsibility at law to the party. He could not indict or bring his action against the House for a malicious prosecution; he was without a remedy. In the mean time, the intelligence would go forth to the public, that the Attorney-general had been ordered to prosecute him for bribery, accompanied by all the severe remarks that were made by Members in debate. If the person were a professional man, he might be ruined. He (Sir C. Grey) contended no precedent had been laid before the House for the course proposed to be pursued, and if there were no precedent, it would be unjust to depart from the usual rule for the first time, in a case where the Committee had not made a report against the individual against whom they were now called upon to direct a prosecution. It was a principle of English law, with respect to evidence, that much was to be judged from the demeanour of the witness when giving his testimony, and his conduct under cross-examination. How many of those who would vote upon the present occasion had seen the witness when questioned? With regard to the comparison that had been made relative to a grand

jury, there was this difference—that here there was no finding at all. The evidence was printed and laid before the House, without having been heard by all the hon. Members, and perhaps many of them had not ever read the whole of it. But had there ever been a case sent down to a petty jury in which the grand jury had not found a true bill? Now some of those who might perhaps in this case be considered in the light of a grand jury were now present, and two of them at least had said there was no case for a prosecution. He would put it to all who had heard the evidence, whether, upon the testimony of one witness, and that a suspicious witness, it would be fair, at the close of a Session, to order this prosecution. If it should end in an acquittal, it would be seen that the House had not proceeded upon sufficient grounds.

Sir R. Inglis explained, that he had not compared the Committee, but the House, to a grand jury.

Mr. Pringle said, that, as a Member of the Committee, he should have thought that Committee would have overstepped the bounds of its duty if it had made a special report with respect to the conduct of Dr. Webster. Still, as a Member of the committee, he did not consider himself precluded from expressing his opinion of the conduct of that individual. They were, in his opinion, in the situation of a grand jury. Strong evidence had been laid before them, which had not been rebutted. In regard to the witness Adams, he must say that he had never heard a witness give his evidence in a more fair and straightforward manner, than that person had done, and the impression on his mind was, that the witness stated the truth. He seemed to believe what he said, and had the appearance of a man who would not be swerved from the truth by any interruption. As the evidence of the witness went to show that Dr. Webster was acting as agent in the election, he must confess that he did not see how bribery could be put down, unless they prosecuted the persons guilty of the practice. He was not aware of any evidence establishing cases of bribery, in either Ludlow or Walsall, but if there was, all he would say was, that if as strong a case as the present were made out against either of those places, he would vote for a motion for the prosecution of the parties. Every case must stand on its own merits, and as the bribery in the present case was

notorious, he would vote for the motion. It might be very well for the hon. Member for Sheffield to say, that the Members of the House knew how general the practice of bribery was—it might be very well for him to state that he himself had been first introduced to St. Alban's by this Dr. Webster, but the hon. Member was much mistaken if he supposed that the experience of the House coincided with his own. He would be sorry if such was the case; and as an opportunity now offered itself to him of expressing his detestation of bribery, he should vote for a motion for the prosecution of those who had been guilty of it.

Mr. *Hutt* felt rather surprised at the observations which had fallen from the hon. Member, because he could not but recollect that, on the part of the committee there had been no expression of opinion, nor had they ever recommended the prosecution of Dr. Webster. What the committee would not have recommended, this House was now called on to recommend, with far less evidence before them than what had been brought before the committee; and, in fact, they were not merely called on to recommend, but to adopt a particular course. If they did adopt such a course, it would be viewed by the country as an act of extraordinary injustice and insanity. He knew that a feeling existed against that committee—that a great deal of pains had been taken to throw odium on that committee by certain persons who seemed to be guided more by their vindictive passions than by due regard to their character and dignity. He felt satisfied if the House expected their proceedings to be regarded with respect by the country, they would not lightly permit imputations to pass unnoticed, which cast a slight on and tended to lower the character of election committees of that House. He would feel exceedingly disappointed should the House adopt the proposition of the right hon. Member for Montgomeryshire. What was the case before them? He did not mean to say that there was no bribery. He fully believed that there was. He fully believed that not only at St. Alban's, but at Walsall, Ludlow, and in all those boroughs where hon. Gentlemen opposite had been so lately triumphant, that notorious bribery had been practised. What case was there against Dr. Webster? What was the evidence—what did it amount to? That a parliamentary agent had suborned two persons to make out a case of bribery

against him, one of these persons so employed having passed by the name of "Adams the liar." The hon. Member who spoke last, said, that he had never heard a witness speak in a more truthful or straightforward manner. Would the House listen while he read one or two of the answers which this model of candour and propriety gave to the questions put to him? The witness was asked if he would swear, that a fellow-workman of his had not marked up the number of lies which he (the witness) told in a day? The witness's answer was, No, I do not believe he did. Do you swear it? was the second question. His answer was, I do not know it. Do you swear it? Yes, I can swear it. Do you swear it? I cannot remember it. There were many jokes passed, which I never thought would be made public. This, then, was the evidence of a person remarkable for the straightforward manner in which he gave his testimony. But who was the second witness against Dr. Webster? A man who was insane, and who had been confined as a lunatic, who laboured under the delusion that Dr. Webster, was the cause of his confinement, and on whom he had often said, that he would be revenged. This was all the evidence against Dr. Webster which had been laid before the committee of the two witnesses retained to make out a case against him, the one being known by the name of "liar Adams," and the other being a lunatic; yet on such testimony did the right hon. Member opposite propose to the House a prosecution for bribery. His belief was, if evidence of this sort was admitted, that neither the property, the character, nor the life, of any gentleman in that House was safe. He would not pursue the subject further, but he would not conclude without calling to the recollection of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that there was a time when bribery was not so much the object of their—aye, even of the right hon. Member for Montgomeryshire—hostility as it now was. He remembered, when in 1833 the right hon. Gentleman rose at two o'clock in the morning, and made a speech of two hours' length, in order to protect the electors of Stafford, who had been convicted before the committee of participating in acts of bribery and gross corruption. He had a perfect recollection of it, and the hon. Gentleman, on referring, would find, that what he had stated was correct. He believed, that the strong indignation expressed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, in

regard to the St. Alban's Committee had arisen, not so much from their detestation of bribery, as from the fact, that the election had been carried in opposition to their political party. He believed, that had they succeeded in bringing home acts of bribery to Lord Listowel, it would have been a triumph for their vindictive passions—a triumph which would have been very little mitigated by the reflection that that noble Lord was in close connection with the Court, and a personal attendant on the Sovereign.

Mr. *Bramston* thought it was very important for the House on this occasion to direct its attention to what had been the conduct of those parties after the transaction. One of the witnesses states that he went and received the money. Now the witness *Howey* is admitted to be a respectable man by all parties. He states, that, having received the money from the person stated to be the party acting for the successful candidate, he sealed it up separately in bulk. The hon. Member for *Sheffield*, (Mr. *Ward*) had said, he could not see this was a case that ought to be singled out to found thereon a prosecution, as all must be aware that bribery was going on at all elections. He was not prepared to concur in that hon. Member's view of transactions of this nature, because instances of bribery were unfortunately of frequent occurrence. It was his duty as an enemy of unfair practices and of corruption to attempt to convict the person who should be detected bribing any elector. He must confess that had he been called upon to act in this case in the capacity of a magistrate, he should, as an honest man, think there was a good cause of commitment. The question before the House was strictly this, was there evidence enough produced to induce the House to direct that the *Attorney-general* should prosecute Dr. *Webster* for bribery at the St. Alban's election? He thought that there was sufficient evidence to induce the House to adopt that course, and he should, therefore, give his vote in favour of the motion of the right hon. the Member for *Montgomeryshire*.

Sir *T. Cockrane* said, that as some allusion had been made in the course of this discussion to a certain letter which he had written connected with the *Ipswich* election, he would admit, that he had written a letter to some of the constituents at *Ipswich*, from which extracts, by some means or other, got into some of the public papers, and in which he said, that the demands

which were made on him were not just and fair, and therefore he should not be a candidate again for the representation of *Ipswich*; but there was not a paragraph in that letter which showed that those demands were in any way connected with bribery. He would not only state, that the letter did not say so, but he was ready to declare on his honour that of the demands which that letter alluded to, not one shilling was connected with bribery. The hon. Member for *Sheffield* had asked, why should not hon. Members come down to the House, and sign a declaration at the table that they had not, either by themselves or by their agents, encouraged or practised bribery. Now, he would tell the hon. Member that he was ready to support a bill for the purpose of calling upon every Member, on taking his seat, to declare that he had not, either directly or indirectly, employed bribery as a means of procuring his return. In the mean time, however, let the hon. Gentleman support the present motion, and then he could bring forward such a bill with a better grace.

The *Attorney-General* hoped the House would not expect him to express any opinion upon the question before the House, or to vote upon the motion of the right hon. Gentleman. He should certainly diligently obey the orders of the House, if they decided that a case for prosecution had been made out. He would prosecute, and use all fair and proper means to ensure justice being executed upon the guilty party. But it must be obvious, that he should be desirous of not giving any vote upon the motion.

*Viscount Ingestrie* observed, that the hon. Member for *Halifax* had described the chief witness in the case as a lunatic and a liar. He (*Viscount Ingestrie*), happened to be in the room when that individual communicated the fact that a bribe had been tendered to him immediately after the transaction took place, and the statement which he then made, was precisely the same which he gave before the committee. He had no reason to doubt, that the individual's statement was perfectly true, and thought, that the House would neglect its duty if it did not direct a prosecution to be instituted in a case which had been so clearly proved. There was a bill on the Table of the House, which had been brought in by the noble Lord opposite, for the prevention of bribery at elections; and it would be a perfect farce for the House to adopt that bill while it refused to prosecute

the present case. The hon. Gentleman had made some allusions to the borough of Stafford, in which he was so erroneous, that he would recommend him to apply to the Attorney-general, who would be able to give him some correct information upon that case.

Mr. *Hutt* in explanation, said, he did not state that Adams was a lunatic and a liar; but it was admitted by the evidence of Adams himself before the committee, that he was a liar—that he was commonly called a liar.

Mr. *Wynn*, in reply, expressed himself much surprised at the tone which had been assumed in this debate by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and particularly by the manner in which the hon. Member for Sheffield had treated the subject. He begged to remind the House, that he had not said one word in the nature of a charge against the committee of any impropriety of conduct in their manner of dealing with this case; nor had he attempted at all to introduce any party considerations into the discussion of this subject. On the contrary, he had studiously avoided everything of the kind. He did not even introduce the name of Lord Listowel, and he had protested against bringing into discussion the circumstance of Dr. Webster having gone to the Treasury immediately before the transaction at St. Alban's, because he did not consider it fair to draw any inference from that fact, which, though it had been mentioned before the committee, was not fully gone into. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir C. Grey) had objected that this case had not been reported by the committee as one which ought to be prosecuted, and that it would be unjust to order a prosecution upon evidence adduced in the absence of the accused, who, therefore, had no opportunity of defending himself or answering the charges made against him. But that must be the case in almost every instance of the kind, for, with the exception of the candidates themselves, or petitioners against a return, the persons implicated were not before the committee, and were not in a position to instruct counsel or give evidence in defence or explanation. The committee had come to a determination, which the evidence seemed to them to warrant, that agency had not been proved, that Dr. Webster was not the agent of Lord Listowel, and, therefore, they had no case to report to the House. They had determined that there was not sufficient evidence to connect Lord Listowel with Dr.

Webster, and to render him responsible for the acts of Dr. Webster, and, therefore, whatever might have been the conduct of that person, it could not affect Lord Listowel. The committee then very properly said, "We may now retire—our business is over, for we are not the counsel of Dr. Webster, and we have no reason to go any further." But still the House was entitled to have the evidence laid on the Table, though no special report might be made; and upon that evidence every individual member had a right to found a motion, if he thought fit. Therefore, when he found evidence imputing bribery to an individual, he was justified in bringing the case before the House, and in calling upon the House to carry it into a court of justice. The hon. Member for Sheffield had thought proper to accuse him of being a protector of bribery; his answer to that was that he had been forty-two years in that House, and during the whole of that time such an accusation had never been brought against him before. He remembered no case in which he had defended persons who had been convicted of bribery. He might have stated his objections to a particular bill, because it might have appeared to him to be defective, but certainly it had never been his practice to protect bribery. With respect to the case of East Retford, and every bill upon the subject of bribery, he had taken an opposite course and supported every proposition for the punishment of bribery, with the exception of a Cornish borough, in which case he thought the evidence was not sufficient to prove the existence of general corruption, and that, therefore, there was no chance of the bill being carried through Parliament. That was the only instance, as far as his recollection served him, of his not supporting a bill to punish bribery. But suppose it had not been so, suppose he had entertained different opinions and pursued a different course; suppose he had been wrong heretofore, would that be any reason why he should not be stopped from recommending a prosecution in a clear and palpable case? He had not been forward in this matter; he had not been anxious to act the part of a public accuser. He had waited in the hope, that the hon. Member who had moved for the production of the evidence, or some other hon. Member, would have taken up the case. But, finding that no one moved in it, he had brought it forward, with a desire to preserve the credit and honour of the House. They

should take care, that the law did not sleep and become a dead letter. If they did not all their debating upon bills relating to bribery would be mere idle talk and waste of time. The hon. Member for Halifax and others had treated this case as if it rested entirely on the evidence of Robert Adama, but it should be borne in mind, that the witness immediately made a communication as to what had taken place upon the hustings, before the mayor, and produced the money which had been given to him, pointing out Dr. Webster as the person who gave it. The statements he then made were precisely the same as he gave in evidence before the committee, and were confirmed by the concurrent testimony of a clergyman, who also pointed out Dr. Webster at the time, and Dr. Webster said, "Well, what of that? the other side have done the same." There could not be a clearer case, and however extensively bribery might be carried on during the approaching elections, even if men walked through the streets holding out bank-notes, and inviting the electors to name their price, the House of Commons could not without the greatest disgrace, notice any such scandalous transactions, if they suffered the present case to go unpunished, because they might be told, "You had a similar case proved before you, and you declined taking any step with a view to prevent a repetition of such transactions." It was, then, for the sake of the people of England, for the sake of the laws of England, and for the sake of common justice, and common honesty, that he called upon the House to agree to his motion.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. *Ward* gave notice, that on Friday, he should call the attention of the House to the bribery, that had taken place at the elections for Cambridge and Ludlow.

PROPOSED PENAL SETTLEMENT.] Sir *C. Grey* rose, pursuant to notice, to move the appointment of a select Committee, to take into consideration the fitness of her Majesty's territory of Labrador for the purposes of a penal settlement. He would not, in the then state of the House, trespass upon their attention by any lengthened observations. He considered, however, that the coast in question, possessed great geographical and other recommendations in favour of the proposition he had to make. In the first place, then, from its proximity to this country, the expense of transporting felons would be lessened

in proportion to the distance; for Labrador was only about 3,000 miles from England, while our present penal colonies were about 14,000. Then the exports which were made from Labrador were about half a million yearly; and these might be increased by the direction of convict labour. With regard to the health of the colony, notwithstanding its cold, that might be guarded against by the fuel which was provided by the great quantity of dwarf timber which the place supplied. The place, too, might be made a useful colony by encouraging its fisheries, which were abundant both on the coasts and the inland lakes and rivers, and this peculiarity, together with its productions in the various minerals, might be rendered subservient to the constant employment of such convicts as might be sent there. Employment might also be furnished in the manufacture of barilla and potash. Neither could the population of the place, which was scattered all over the country and the coast, suffer demoralisation by contact with the convicts; and the latter, while secured by the climate and the situation of the country from the likelihood of escape, had the advantage of being rendered eligible for being again suffered to mingle with society after having gradually expiated minor offences in their transportation. Under all the circumstances of the case, he thought his proposition was recommended both by humanity and sound policy; and, although he did not mean to press the House to a division on it at the present period of the Session, he hoped that some hon. Member possessing more weight and influence than he did, would draw their attention practically and usefully to the important subject early in the next.

Mr. *Hindley* thought the labours of the missionaries in this region would not be by any means subverted, if the present motion was carried.

Mr. *F. Maule* said, it must appear to all that it would be inexpedient to go on with a discussion upon that important subject at the present period of the Session; but, at the same time, he was not sorry that the question had been brought before the House. However, he differed from his right hon. Friend as to the principle laid down, that it was a recommendation to the place alluded to, for a penal settlement, to have it so near this country as it had been described. He held it that the proximity of Labrador to England was

one thing that would render it an improper place for the object in question. With regard to the quantity of labour capable of being furnished, too, he considered that the place alluded to, presented difficulties for supplying labour greater than what had been stated. He hoped, in conclusion, that the motion would not be pressed forward on that occasion.

Viscount *Mahon* said, there could be no doubt of the uselessness of having a Committee to inquire into the condition of Labrador in the present state of the House. He would not then go into the consideration of the many topics connected with the immediate question before the House, or describe what he thought to be its unfitness for the proposed plan. He would, however, take that opportunity of again appealing to her Majesty's Government on the behalf of the poor convicts at Woolwich, among whom the mortality was daily and hourly increasing to a most alarming degree. In the last week, there were no less than six deaths, all young, and previously hale men. This arose from the crowding together which had taken place on board the hulks in consequence of the recent regulations of Government respecting transportation. The system, in short, now acted on was one of the most frightful that could be conceived, and one of the most destructive possible to human life. In the estimates of last year, provision was made for 3,400 convicts in health, with 200 sick; and although it was resolved by the House on his motion that further increase was inexpedient, the estimates of this year showed no less than 3,750 to be provided for in health, and about 250 in sickness—equal in all to 4,000. It was, therefore, easy to foresee as well as to account for the fatal consequences that have ensued.

Mr. *F. Maule* said, the mortality which existed amongst the convicts, and even the soldiery in the hulks, was owing to an epidemic which prevailed amongst them; and that alone was the cause of the late fatality.

Sir *T. Cochrane* was understood to express his disapprobation of the coast of Labrador as a penal settlement; and one reason was, because he considered that the safe custody of the convicts could not be secured within any four walls that might be there erected.

Sir *R. Peel* said, he had inferred from what had fallen from the Under-Secretary

of State, that there was some inclination in his mind, as representing the Government that from their experience of the evils attending confinement at home, it would be desirable to turn their attention to the construction of some new penal settlement, avoiding the evils of penal settlements as they exist. He wished to ask the hon. Gentleman whether the Government had in view any such new settlement from an experience of its advantages.

Mr. *F. Maule* said, that all he had meant to state was, that as the noble Lord had brought this question before the House, he was not sorry his hon. Friend behind him had suggested some point, in order that the public might see the difficulty of fixing upon a special point for a penal settlement. He begged to say, that the Government were satisfied with the present penal settlements, and the system of the hulks.

Sir *R. Peel* had understood the hon. Gentleman to state, that transportation to some of the settlements had been suspended. Could the hon. Gentleman state the number of convicts now sent out?

Mr. *F. Maule* said, that, off hand, he could not. Transportation of convicts sentenced for seven years had been discontinued.

Lord *Mahon* believed he could answer the question for the hon. Gentleman. The exact number of persons sentenced to confinement in the hulks previously to 1829 was 1,800. Subsequently, under the administration of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, the number had been regularly increasing. This year it was 3,650, and under the estimate, a further increase was proposed. Having answered one question for the hon. Gentleman, he hoped he would allow him to ask him one in return—namely, when the returns for which he had moved in March last, relative to coroners' inquests at Woolwich, which had been promised immediately, and to which the recent mortality gave additional importance, would be produced.

Mr. *F. Maule* said, he had done all he could to procure them. A coroner's notes were as much his property as those of a judge of the superior courts, and he had not been able to obtain them. He could do no more than ask for them.

Sir *C. Grey* did not mean to press his motion, which was negatived.

**RAILROADS (IRELAND.)**] Viscount *Morpeth*, in rising for leave to bring in a bill for the purpose of establishing railroads in Ireland, said, that in the present state of the Session, he should not move for leave to introduce a bill of any importance, with any other design than that of having it printed, so as to give information to the public generally on the subject, more especially to that portion of it more immediately concerned. He would merely then refer to a statement which had been made on the occasion of his bringing forward this motion. The right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth, towards the conclusion of his speech last week, had made a slight and passing allusion to this motion, as if it had been brought forward with a view of propping up the Government on the eve of a general election. The fact was, that certain private individuals had come forward and made a proposition on the subject to the Government. He would merely state what that proposition was, and not enter at any length into any of the circumstances connected with it. He was still of opinion that the proposition which he had first brought forward on the subject of the Government undertaking various railways in Ireland, was the most expedient plan. But as when he had brought it forward, he had reason to believe, that it would not meet with the assent of the legislature, he had withdrawn it, and had not attempted again to introduce it, although he believed that persons of all parties had since expressed themselves in its favour. A proposition on that subject had been submitted to the Government on the part of certain individuals of great character, station, and financial ability, and although in making that proposition they had doubtless, imagined that they were not entering upon a hazardous speculation, yet he honestly believed that they had been principally induced to take up the project, because they believed that it would be of advantage to Ireland. Those Gentlemen had adopted as the basis of their calculations, the report of the Railway Commissioners, for which the country was so much indebted to the assiduity and energy of his late excellent and lamented friend, Mr. Drummond. They had proposed to the Government to raise a capital of 1,300,000*l.*, to be applied in the first instance to the completion of the southern line of railway, that from Dublin to Limerick, which would

go quite across the island, and would unite the two seas; the works to be carried on under the exclusive superintendence of Commissioners to be appointed by the Government, and in order to obviate any jealousy as to the selection of these commissioners by the Government, it was proposed to nominate them in the bill, and they would consist of Sir John Burgoyne, Mr. Rennie, and Mr. Jones, who had been the secretaries to the Irish Railway Commission. The sum was proposed to be raised by means of debentures, and the expenditure to be under the management of a Board of Control consisting of seven Members, and the Government had reason to hope that Gentlemen of all parties would be found willing to give their services as Members of such board gratuitously. The debentures, when signed by two commissioners and by two Members of the Board of Control, to bear an interest of 4 per cent., and in case that should not be made good by the profits of the railway it was guaranteed to be paid by the countries which would benefit by the railway passing through them. In addition to the interest of 4 per cent., the holders of the debentures would be entitled to one-half the surplus profits. The commissioners named in the bill were to have the sole direction of the works. The lands necessary were to be taken in the manner to be provided by the act. The bill contained further powers enabling the directors to extend the line to Cork, and also to enable other parties to make lines in other parts of Ireland at the same time. A deposit of ten per cent. on the capital to be paid up before the act should come into operation. Such were the main features of the proposal which these gentlemen had made to the Government; and as at present it was not his intention to elicit the opinion of the House as to its merits, but merely to lay the bill before the House, in order that it might be considered fully both by the House and by the people of Ireland, he should not enter into any discussion as to the merits of the scheme. In bringing forward the measure of the present time, his only object was to give facilities to the present Government, or if it should be displaced, to any other that might succeed it, for bringing forward a measure calculated to benefit the population of Ireland.

Mr. *Staw* seconded the motion. He was happy to be enabled to bear testimony

to the great attention paid to the subject by the noble Lord; and he believed the project was likely to be very successful.

Lord *Stanley* inquired whether the proprietors of land through which the line should pass would have the power of resistance to it? Also, whether they were to be remunerated, and how and what were the means to be afforded them for the defence of their rights?

Viscount *Morpeth* said, he did not intend to make the assent or dissent of the landlords essential to the carrying the bill; but there were regulations for compensation on the principle adopted by the Shannon Navigation Bill, which he believed was satisfactory to all parties. In answer to a question from Mr. Shaw, the noble Lord added, that it was his intention to give a general power to other parts of Ireland to adopt the principle laid down for this line.

Mr. *Sergeant Jackson* said, a railroad might pass along the margin of one county and yet the whole expense might be thrown upon the adjoining county upon whose territory it proceeded. He begged to know if this was to be the case?

Viscount *Morpeth* said, that it was intended to give a power of applying the principle of the bill to other parts of Ireland than those named in it; and that the deficiency to be provided for, if any, between the guaranteed interest and the receipts of the line would be made up by an equitable assessment on the respective counties benefitted by it.

Mr. *S. O'Brien* regretted that the bill of the noble Lord was not as perfect or satisfactory as that proposed by him last Session. He however thanked the noble Lord for the proposition he had just made, and he begged to assure him that it was one of the most popular measures which he could have thought of introducing into Ireland.

Mr. *F. French* complained of the system of bringing forward measures of this kind (which were so well calculated to raise the expectations of the people of Ireland) and then abandoning them. He would take an opportunity, early in the next Session of Parliament, of bringing forward this question, and of reminding the noble Lord of his promise upon the subject, which he thought pledged his noble Friend to exert himself in carrying it through Parliament. He thought, however, that the noble Lord was bound to

bring forward this bill before, when he was conscious of having excited the expectation of the Irish people upon it, of having the approval of this House, and also from his own conviction as to the general approval of the measure. He was, however, thankful to the noble Lord for bringing forward this measure even at so late a period, and he (Mr. French) would support the proposition most heartily.

Mr. *Lucas* thought that this would be a most desirable experiment to try whether English capital could be laid out in Ireland to advantage.

Mr. *Littton* said, that all parties in Ireland had signified their approval of this project.

Leave given.

WEST-INDIA MAIL STATION.] Sir *J. Yarde Buller* moved that the Committee on the West-India Mails be instructed to send for and examine the commissioners appointed to inquire respecting the port to be selected for the arrival and departure of steam-vessels conveying the mails to the West-Indies. Those gentlemen were willing to attend, but they did not think they ought to volunteer their evidence; and the Committee did not think they ought to send for them; but it was, in his opinion, highly necessary that those who had inspected the ports and reported thereon, should be called upon to explain that report, but he would not press for the attendance of the Gentleman connected with the Post-office.

Mr. *Freshfield* thought that they ought to understand upon what principle such a course was to be adopted, because it would be unusual for the House, having little information on the subject, to control the discretion of a committee, which had full powers to examine witnesses and call for documents.

Captain *Pechell* thought that the hon. Member for Devonshire had better leave the matter in the hands of the Committee.

Sir *T. Cochrane* objected to any interference with the commissioners. It would put those gentlemen who had been appointed, as it were, judges in this matter in an unfair and unfavourable position to call them before the Committee.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* had waited for the explanation of the Members of the Committee. He understood that they had decided not to call before them



these parties, whom they ought at the very first to have called. He had opposed the appointment of the committee as inconvenient; and he had been surprised at the course which they had pursued, and he hoped that such an expression of the opinion of the House would be given as would induce the Committee to reconsider their decision. There was no objection on the part of the Government or those gentlemen to their examination, but they properly refused to thrust themselves upon the committee. Not to have called these gentlemen was like omitting the character of *Hamlet* from the play of *Hamlet*—it was the most extraordinary urse that could have been pursued.

Captain *Pechell* said, that the supposition was, that the Government objected to their examination.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* could assure the hon. Member that there was no such objection.

Mr. *Hodgson* said, that the feeling of the Committee was, that they ought not to put those gentlemen on their trial before the Committee, but he had not felt that objection; and now, that it appeared that the Government had no objection to their examination, he should renew his motion in the Committee.

Mr. *C. Wood* hoped the hon. Baronet would not press his motion, but that the Committee would exercise the power they possessed of sending for the commissioners, since they had no objection to be examined.

Sir *J. Y. Buller* said, that, as that was the case, he would withdraw his motion.

Motion withdrawn.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, June 9, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—County Bridges; Highway Rates.—Read a second time:—Metropolis Improvements.—Read a third time:—Charitable Trusts. Petitions presented. By Sir Mathew Wood, Mr. Vivian, Mr. Greig, Mr. Gillon, Mr. O'Connell, Colonel Salwey, Mr. W. O. Stanley, and other hon. Members, from Cornwall, Stirlingshire, Lanark, Dundee, Salford, Anglesea, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. H. Vernon, Sir G. Filmer, Colonel Sibthorp, and other hon. Members, from a great many places, against a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir R. Bateson, and Mr. H. Bailey, from places in the county of Londonderry, and from Inverness, for the Abolition of Patronage in the Church of Scotland.—By Mr. Plumtre, from Glastonbury, Turlington, and other places, for the Repeal of the Roman Catholic Relief Act.—By Mr. T. Duncombe, from William Blithe, complaining of Bribery at Nottingham during the late Election; from London, Let-

cester, Leamington, and other places, for the Release of Persons confined for Political Offences; and from Argbroath, for the Establishment of the People's Charter.—By Mr. Hindley, from the Society for the Protection of the Aborigines of our Colonies, for Inquiry into the Execution of two natives of Australia for the alleged Murder of two Europeans.

MR. O'CONNELL AND MR. ROBERT TWISS.] Mr. Sergeant *Jackson* hoped for the indulgence of the House while he addressed it for a few moments, and they should be very few, on a matter which was in some degree personal to himself. It would be in the recollection of the House, that in the course of the debate on the want of confidence in Ministers the hon. and learned Member for Dublin made an attack on the Conservative landlords of Ireland, whom he charged with being harsh and oppressive to their tenants. He took that opportunity of stating that the hon. and learned Member himself was not a good landlord, for that he had acted towards his tenants in a harsh and oppressive manner, and when the hon. and learned Member expressed a denial of that charge, he had asked him, would he deny having distrained on some of his tenants in April for rent due in the previous March, and he said, that he had asked the question on the authority of a gentleman (Mr. Twiss) who had called on him at his residence in Dublin, and told him the circumstance, and added that he might make any use of it, and of his name as his authority, in any way he thought proper. When he (Mr. Sergeant Jackson) had resumed his seat, the hon. and learned Member got up and denied having ever made any such distress, and that if any such had been made it was altogether without his knowledge, and that if he should find that it had been done by his agent from any private motive of his own, he and that gentleman should part. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Sergeant Jackson) then detailed the particulars of an interview between himself and the hon. Member for Tralee (Mr. Maurice O'Connell) when the latter called on him to ask the Christian name of Mr. Twiss, the gentleman from whom he had his information. He could not then recollect the Christian name or the date of the year when the distrains were made; but he told Mr. M. O'Connell that he had made a memorandum of the circumstance at the time, and as soon as he could find it he would give him the particulars he required. He had since found the memorandum, from which it appeared that the distrains

were said to have been made in April, 1838. Besides this memorandum he had now in his hand a letter which he had that morning received from Mr. Twiss, which he owed it to himself and to the House, which always felt concerned in the honour of its Members with respect to any statements which they might make, to read. The letter bore the postmark of the Castleconnell post, and was dated June 6, 1841. It was as follows:

"My dear Sir,—I read with great pleasure the speech you made in the House of Commons on the night of the 3d of June inst., in which you truly stated that my celebrated countryman, Daniel O'Connell, in April, 1838, distrained on his tenants for the rent due the month before. This I have reason to know is the strict truth, as I heard it at the time from the distrainers and the distrained parties. I was on a visit at the time with my old friend James Butler, who lives within four miles of Derrynane. I deem it right, in justice to your good intentions of supporting the credit of the Conservative landlords, to put you in possession of this fact, and you are at liberty to make whatever use you may think fit of this communication. With every sentiment of respect,

"I remain, my dear Sir, yours most sincerely,  
ROBERT TWISS."

"Castleconnell, June 6."

He (Mr. Sergeant Jackson) thought that this letter fully justified him in the statement he had made. Mr. Twiss he had not seen for six years before the time he came to his study. Here, then, were the name and address of the party on whose authority the statement was made. But it might be said also to rest on the authority of Mr. James Butler, a gentleman of the highest respectability and the strictest honour, one who resided within four miles of Derrynane. He believed, also, that he was a relation of the hon. Member for Dublin, at least he had heard the hon. Member boast of the relationship; but whether it was so or not, the hon. and learned Member knew best. He had already said he found the memorandum. It was to this effect:—"Dis. by O'Connell in April, for rent due 25th of March, 1838." Looking at these circumstances, he felt sure the House would consider him fully justified in what he had stated.—[Cheers.]

Mr. O'Connell said, he admired that cheer much. If ever there was an instance stronger than another of the injustice of making a personal charge on any Member without giving him notice, the present

was the one. The hon. and learned Member for Bandon first made this charge against him without any previous intimation, and set it forth without giving the Christian name or the address of his informant, or even the year when those discharges were said to have been made. Was that fair or candid? Would any gentleman opposite have considered himself fairly treated in having a charge so brought against him? It was his (Mr. O'Connell's) case to-day; it might be that of any other Member to-morrow. His friend Mr. James Butler, than whom a more excellent man did not exist, had been now quoted as an indirect testimony in support of the charge against him; but had any one presumed to state that he had mentioned any thing of the sort? There was no man for whom he had a higher respect or regard than for Mr. Butler, though no two men differed more in their religious and political opinions. It was said, also, that the statement was made on the authority of the distrainers and the distrained. He said it was totally false—there was not a word of truth in it. It could not have possibly happened at the time, without his knowing something of it since, and if the hon. and learned Member for Bandon had given him notice of his intention to bring the charge, he would have refuted it on the instant. But who was this Mr. Robert Twiss, on whose authority the charge rested? He had been a magistrate, but was not now in the commission of the peace.

Mr. Sergeant Jackson intimated his belief that Mr. Twiss was still in the commission.

Mr. O'Connell said, it was not so. Mr. Twiss had had many misfortunes in the world. He had been a bankrupt, and had been discharged under the Insolvent Act. But he would not dwell on that. Mr. Twiss's name, however, had been notorious for his want of strict adherence to truth. In fact, for more than twenty years he had been known in the county of Kerry as "Lying Bobby Twiss." As to the statement of the hon. and learned Member for Bandon, that he had boasted of his relationship to Mr. James Butler, he would say that he should proudly boast of it if it were the fact; but it was not, and it was not true that he had ever boasted of it, so that the statement was doubly untrue. But again let him ask the House, was it fair to get up charges of this nature, and in this manner, against any man? It

would seem as if the hon. and learned Sergeant had kept an office in Dublin for the purpose of registering such, or he would never have made a charge on such authority; but he repeated the whole was false.

Mr. Sergeant *Jackson* said, with reference to the statement that he kept an office in Dublin for the purpose of registering such charges, nothing could be further from the truth. He could not prevent a gentleman from calling on him in his study and making the statement he did. As to the complaint that he had not given him notice of this charge, he would say, that he could not have anticipated that the hon. and learned Gentleman was about to make an attack on the landlords of Ireland.

Subject dropped.

CLERKS OF JUSTICES OF THE PEACE.] Mr. *Lockhart* wished to know from the hon. Member the Under Secretary for the Home Department whether the Government had taken any steps to prevent clerks of justices of the peace in Scotland, (particularly in Scotland we understood) from acting as political agents in election contests? The practice was most unfair. He was aware that Government had shown its disapprobation of it, but he wanted to know whether it had issued any further orders on the matter?

Mr. *F. Maule* said the Government had no power to make any further orders with respect to it. The Secretary of State for the Home Department had intimated to the parties that the practice of clerks of the justice acting as political agents was wrong, and that, like the clerks to the sheriffs, they ought not to take any part as political agents. Some of them had acted on the intimation, but others had refused to do so. Government had not the power to make any order on the subject.

DOG CARTS.] On the motion that the Speaker do leave the chair for the House to go into Committee on the Dog Carts Bill,

Mr. *Pryme* opposed the motion. The Bill was an interference with a humble class of traders. He was glad to see his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House. If his right hon. Friend would consent to allow an ass to be used [*laughter*], it might seem very ludicrous to the House to name the animal; it might perhaps be more agreeable to right

hon. Gentlemen if he called the animal by the name of donkey. What he meant to say was, that if an ass were allowed to be used with the same license as was paid for using a dog, it would tend materially to lessen the number of dog carts, at least by one-tenth, throughout the country. He would conclude by moving that the Bill be committed this day six months.

Mr. *Warburton* seconded the motion, because he was satisfied that it was a waste of the time of the House to legislate on such trivial matters. Last year it had been attempted to excite a feeling on the subject by appealing to their humanity, and stating that the dog was not proper for a beast of draught, surely those who had made such a statement must have forgotten the Kamschatka dogs. The object of the measure was to prevent persons possessed of small means and in humble life, who could not afford to employ other animals, from doing their best to gain a livelihood. If the reason for putting down these carts was, that dogs were small animals and liable to throw down horses, then they ought to graduate the dimensions of all animals suffered to draw in the streets, and to prohibit Shetland ponies.

Sir *R. H. Inglis* said, that having the honour to be one of the persons whose names were on the back of this bill, he would just shortly reply to the objections of the hon. mover and seconder of the amendment, that the more straightforward course for getting rid of this bill would be, by moving that so much of the Metropolitan Police Act as relates to the use of dogs in drawing carts and other vehicles be repealed. He could not see why the dogs in the country should be treated worse than the dogs of London. The hon. Member for Bridport had spoken of the dogs of Kamschatka, but he might have come still nearer home, for dogs were used as beasts of draught in Lapland and in Holland. But in Lapland and Kamschatka they ran over snow, and in Holland upon sand; therefore they did not suffer in the same way as in this country. He supposed, that the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State, did not attach less importance to humanity now, than when he supported the measure which applied to the metropolis; and therefore he expected he would vote for this bill.

Mr. *Hume* said, that he had been a Member of the committee before which the

evidence was taken which led to the proposal of this bill. Upon the evidence adduced before that committee he would not give it his support. If the question were one of humanity, why should donkeys be allowed to be ridden? He believed there were no animals who were worse used than donkeys, and if the question were put on the ground of humanity, the bill should be applied to them. There was no doubt any animals might be abused, but that was no reason why they should never be employed. There were laws already in existence to punish cruelty to animals, and he thought it better to leave the dogs to the protection of those laws. Every one might see that dogs drew carts with the greatest pleasure, at least they seemed to have a great desire to do so. He thought the House should not legislate upon matters which it would be much better to leave to the good sense and humane feelings of the community.

Mr. East replied. He had introduced the bill for the purpose of suppressing those cruelties to dogs which took place no less in the country than in town. It should always be remembered, that the feet of dogs were not protected by nature so as to enable them to bear heavy weights. The bill was extremely simple, following closely the provisions of the Metropolitan Act, but extending it to the country. The dog-cart nuisance was not only offensive to humanity, but was oftentimes productive of serious consequences. Only within the last few months the Lynn coach had been overturned by a dog-cart, and much mischief was the result. He hoped, therefore, that the House would allow the bill to be proceeded with.

The House divided on the question that the Speaker do now leave the Chair :—Ayes 141; Noes 30; Majority 111.

#### List of the AYES.

Adams, Viscount	Buller, Sir J. Y.
Alston, R.	Burrell, Sir C.
Antrobus, E.	Calcraft, J. H.
Bagge, W.	Campbell, Sir J.
Baring, rt. hon. F. T.	Canning, rt. hn. Sir S.
Barneby, J.	Chute, W. L. W.
Barrington, Viscount	Clerk, Sir G.
Bell, M.	Collier, J.
Blackstone, W. S.	Conolly, E.
Botfield, B.	Craig, W. G.
Briscoe, J. I.	Cresswell, C.
Broadley, H.	Crewe, Sir G.
Brodie, W. B.	Crompton, Sir S.
Brotherton, J.	Darby, G.
Bush, L. W.	Darlington, Earl of

Denison, W. J.	Martin, J.
Douglas, Sir C. E.	Maule, hon. F.
Dugdale, W. S.	Mordaunt, Sir J.
Duncombe, hon. W.	Morgan, O.
Duncombe, hon. A.	Nicholl, J.
Duncombe, T.	Noel, hon. C. G.
Eaton, R. J.	O'Connell, M. J.
Egerton, Sir P.	O'Ferrall, R. M.
Ellice, rt. hn. E.	Ord, W.
Estcourt, T.	Packe, C. W.
Evans, W.	Paget, Colonel
Farnham, E. B.	Pakington, J. S.
Fazakerley, J. N.	Patten, J. W.
Fielden, W.	Pechell, Captain
Fellowes, E.	Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.
Filmer, Sir E.	Pigot, rt. hon. D.
Fitzpatrick, J. W.	Plumtre, J. P.
Freemantle, Sir T.	Price, R.
Freshfield, J. W.	Pusey, P.
Gordon, hon. Captain	Rae, right hn. Sir W.
Goring, H. D.	Rice, hon. E. R.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.	Rich, H.
Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.	Roche, W.
Grey, rt. hn. Sir G.	Rolleston, L.
Guest, Sir J.	Round, C. G.
Hale, R. B.	Round, J.
Hamilton, C. J. B.	Rushbrooke, Colonel
Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.	Russell, Lord J.
Harland, W. C.	Scholefield, J.
Heneage, G. W.	Sheppard, T.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Herries, rt. hn. J.	Sinclair, Sir G.
Hinde, J. H.	Smith, A.
Hindley, C.	Smith, G. R.
Hodgson, R.	Smith, R. V.
Holmes, W.	Smyth, Sir G. H.
Hope, hon. C.	Somerset, Lord G.
Hotham, Lord	Sotheron, T. E.
Houstoun, G.	Spencer, hn. Captain
Howard, P. H.	Stanley, E.
Humphery, J.	Stanley, Lord
Hurt, F.	Stansfield, W. R. C.
Hutt, W.	Stewart, J.
Irton, S.	Stuart, W. V.
James, W.	Sturt, H. C.
Kelburne, Viscount	Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.
Knight, H. G.	Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Lambton, H.	Turner, E.
Law, hon. C. E.	Tyrell, Sir J. T.
Lowther, hn. Colonel	Vere, Sir C. B.
Lowther, J. H.	Verney, Sir H.
Lushington, rt. hn. S.	Waddington, H. S.
Lygon, hon. General	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Mackenzie, T.	Wood, B.
Mackenzie, W. F.	
Mackinnon, W. A.	
Mahon, Viscount	

#### TELLERS.

East, J. B.  
Inglis, Sir R. H.

#### List of the NOES.

Ainsworth, P.	Hawes, B.
Arbuthnott, hon. H.	Hector, C. J.
Baines, E.	Herbert, hon. S.
Bryan, G.	Hume, J.
Buller, C.	Jervis, J.
Courtenay, P.	Jones, J.
Dennistoun, J.	Labouchere, rt. hn. H.
Evans, G.	Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.

Milton, Viscount  
O'Brien, W. S.  
Parker, J.  
Rawdon, Col. J. D.  
Richards, R.  
Salwey, Colonel  
Sanford, E. A.  
Strickland, Sir G.

Strutt, E.  
Thornely, T.  
Walsh, Sir J.  
Wilbraham, G.  
Wilde, Sir T.  
TELLERS.  
Pryme, G.  
Warburton, H.

House in Committee.

On the first clause,

Mr. *Warburton* said, that by that clause, if a child were riding upon a Newfoundland dog in a private garden, a constable might enter the garden, take the parties before a sitting magistrate, and have them convicted in the penalties of the Act.

Colonel *Salwey* thought such legislation was wholly unworthy of the House.

Mr. *Fox Maule* said, the bill was confined to high roads, and the hon. Member had put a forced construction on the clause.

Clause with amendments agreed to.

On the clause authorising constables to apprehend offenders without a warrant, and take them before a magistrate, being put,

Mr. *Warburton* proposed, that it should be omitted altogether.

Mr. *C. Buller* said, that a policeman had no power to take up a person guilty of an assault without a warrant, but in the graver offence of employing a dog to draw a cart, it appeared that he was to have the power. He complained of this great legislative enactment, that it was imperfect, inasmuch as it made no provision for the objects of its peculiar care. When they had taken up the man, what did they propose to do with the dog? He was deprived of his only natural protector, and did they intend to leave him to the wide world, without any food but such as he could get by chance without attacking some unfortunate passenger. A bill was brought in by a worthy Alderman some years since, for the prevention of hydrophobia, which had been treated with great ridicule by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth. One clause of that bill empowered a constable to take up any mad dog. In consequence of various imperfections that bill was referred to a Select Committee, the Members of which had, he supposed, been chosen for their names. These were Mr. Lamb, Mr. Fox, and himself (Mr. "Bull"er)—who was at the time a very young Member. That committee, however, had elicited some

most important medical testimony, from which it appeared, that hydrophobia was one of the rarest diseases known, and that it never originated spontaneously, but was always the consequence of absolute contagion. The hon. Member for Shoreham supported the measure on the ground of humanity to bad riders, as dog-carts made horses shy, and unhorsed gentlemen who were not very firm in their saddles; but if they were to legislate for the safety of gentlemen who could not ride well, they ought to go further. Many horses shied at a wheelbarrow—and he never knew a horse who would pass a knife-grinder's wheel without shying. Therefore, if they wished to carry out the Legislative foresight for gentlemen who could not ride well to the full, they ought to follow up this great measure, by a bill against knife grinders' wheels and wheelbarrows.

Clause agreed to, as were the other clauses.

The House resumed; Report to be received.

DANISH CLAIMS.] Mr. *Cresswell* moved, that the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to address her Majesty on the subject of the Danish Claims.

The *Solicitor-General* said, it was undoubtedly true that a resolution had been adopted by the House for an address to the Crown on the subject of these claims, the amount of which was somewhere about 270,000*l.* He was sure it would be gratifying to the House to afford relief to any persons who had sustained loss, but he did not think they ought to vote away so large a sum of the public money without taking into consideration the circumstances under which these claims were made. On the present occasion, he felt, that the amount was of very little importance, compared to the principle involved in it. The House was no doubt aware of the general nature of these claims. On two occasions lately it had been discussed in that House. It appeared to him, that the arguments did not embrace the entire principle. The compensation asked on the present occasion, was compensation for the loss of certain ships and goods, which were seized by the Danish Government in 1807, in consequence of the attack that had been made on Copenhagen by this country. About thirty years subse-

quent to the seizures, was the first time an application was made to the House of Commons on the subject. The first application was made for compensation for the loss sustained by certain individuals for the confiscation of debts which had been owing by Danish subjects to the subjects of that country, and which had been confiscated in consequence of the events to which he had alluded. Subsequently there was a compensation demanded for goods on shore, which had been seized by the Danish Government. A discussion took place, and it appeared to the House, that they ought, with propriety, to sanction those claims of compensation. The ground on which these claims were urged by Sir James Mackintosh, were very general, but they were to the effect, that the goods seized, and the debts confiscated, were seized and confiscated contrary to the law of nations, and that where the Government did not enforce redress, they were bound to make good the claims of their own subjects. That point was discussed more than once, and undoubtedly it did seem, that the principle which had been laid down and acted upon was, that if the government of the people suffering the injustice did not think it right to enforce compensation from the offending Government, the burthen was transferred to the Government to which the party belonged. The concession of those claims gave rise to an application, in the year 1834 or 1836, on behalf of the owners of ships and goods which had been seized afloat, and encouraged by the success of the previous application, petitions were presented on behalf of this claim. Various statements had been made to the House in relation to the facts, on a former occasion, when the subject of the claim was brought before the House, when it was negatived. It had since been advocated by several hon. Members. Although the principle he had referred to was adopted by the House in relation to debts and goods on shore, no such authority was applicable to the present question, because it stood on a different footing, and involved a principle which was totally different. He would call the attention of the House to a distinct statement of the facts, as many speeches had been made in that House on the subject, which varied somewhat as to the true statement respecting the origin of these claims. It would be material for the

House to attend to the state of relations existing between this country and Denmark at the time of the seizure of the ships and goods. On the 27th of July 1807, the English fleet sailed from this country with sealed orders, and arrived early in August in the Great Belt, and cut off all communication between Zealand and the continent. From the 3d of August negotiations were prosecuted by Mr. Jackson, seeking for the surrender of the Danish fleet, for the security of this country. Upon the 16th of August—a most important date—the Danish Government issued a proclamation, stating that the English Envoy had on the 13th declared that hostilities would commence, and therefore, that the two countries were at war; and then gave orders for the seizure and detention of British property. Now, as very much had been said on every occasion, on the subject of want of notice of caution on the part of those in possession of the ships and goods which were ultimately seized by the Danish government, and for which compensation was claimed, he wished to impress upon the House the circumstances which occurred at this date, the 16th, long before the seizure of the property. A proclamation was issued by the Danish government, stating, that the two countries were at war of the same date. Admiral Gambier published a document explaining the objects of the expedition, seeking the possession of the Danish fleet, and threatening capture in case of refusal. On the 24th, the Danish government issued a further manifesto, and on the 25th of August, the Admiral, who was the officer of this country, issued an order for the detention of the Danish vessels. On the 2nd of September, the bombardment of Copenhagen took place, and on the same day there was an order in council issued for the seizure of Danish ships. On the 23d of September, a manifesto was issued by Great Britain, and on the 4th of November, there was a declaration of war. Now, in the course of the discussion which had taken place on this subject, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had protested against being supposed to sanction the claim. The matter was referred to a committee, in order to ascertain the facts connected with the claims; and a report was ultimately obtained in July last upon these facts. That report gave the dates on which the seizures had been made,

He had called the attention of that House to the date of the 16th of August. One vessel was seized on the 23d of August, and four on the 25th. In the month of September, there were five. The whole of the remainder were seized at a later period, extending through September, October, and November, and the claim to which he had referred embraced the whole of those captures down to the month of December. Now what was the ground upon which the House was justified in imposing a burthen exceeding a quarter of a million on the public in respect of these captures? However much it might be lamented that public events should inflict loss upon individuals, it was not a received principle that taxes should be imposed, and that compensation should be paid by the public to individuals who unfortunately suffered from the operations of war. It required something more than that an enemy should have seized the property of individuals to warrant the House in voting public money to relieve the sufferers. If these vessels had been seized according to the laws war as observed amongst civilized nations, on what ground could the House distinguish the Danish claims from the claims of the immense class of ruined persons who had suffered from the seizures of France, Russia, and other nations? It was most material to see whether there was any real ground of distinction. He had cautiously attended to the grounds urged at various times in order to induce the House to vote the public money. First of all, it had been stated, that these individuals had a claim to compensation, because they had no notice of the intention of this country to commence hostilities with Denmark; that they embarked upon their voyage, and remained in the Baltic in full confidence that the amicable relations between this country and Denmark were not likely to be disturbed. He presumed that something more must be shown than that the Government did not give notice to the merchants of this country when they were about to commence hostile operations or to commit a hostile act, or to commence a war against another power. Whoever attended to the circumstances attending the seizure of the Danish fleet would perceive that the slightest previous intimation of the intention of the Government, if it had not totally defeated the immensely important subject which was gained by the seizure of the Danish fleet, would at least have added very greatly to the difficulty of

the enterprise. It was impossible, consistent with public duty, and with public policy, that the Government could have been justified in giving such information. No notice, therefore was given prior to the sailing of the fleet, except what was afforded by those public acts to which he had referred. He presumed that when the British fleet appeared off Copenhagen, and occupied the station which it did, no man in his senses would draw any other inference than that it was extremely probable that hostilities would take place. The vessels did not arrive there certainly with any view to preserve peace in any sense which could induce persons to suppose that peace was secure. But this fleet arriving there at the date he had mentioned—on the 2d of August—these vessels continued there. He would not say that by such conduct they had acted imprudently. While the fleet was there, he would not deny but that they were safe enough; but where they traced the course of events, and found these vessels remaining after the English fleet had left the Baltic, taking with them the Danish fleet and stores, no one could contend but that they had had abundant information given to them, sufficient to put any prudent person upon their guard? He begged the House to notice what the principle was on which this compensation was claimed—and to what that principle would lead. If that country found it necessary, on a sudden emergency to make an attack on a Foreign Power, and the Foreign Power should seize on British property—thus circumstanced, would that make a claim for compensation. He beseeched the House to look to the public consequences to which such a principle must lead. He, therefore, thought the argument that they had not had sufficient intimation was one which was not applicable in the present instance. But it was said the House ought to consider the peculiar circumstances under which that fleet had gone to Denmark. As far as he could gather them the circumstances were these. The Government of the day having no doubt, obtained secret information of the fact, understood that the Danish Government had agreed to give Buonaparte the use of their fleet to serve against this country. In fact there was a secret article to that effect in the Treaty of Tilsit. The British Government having obtained information of that fact, acted in anticipation of the secret article. They found the Danish Government was a weak Govern-

ment compared with the French, and knew that they had agreed to aid the French against this country by the loan of the Danish fleet, and undoubtedly, and he thought rightly, before that secret article could be acted on, the Government thought it right to save this country from the dangerous position in which it would be placed by the execution of that secret article of the treaty by sending to Denmark and seizing the fleet. If a weak man possessed an instrument capable of destroying you, and a strong man, your enemy, had induced the weak man to lend him that instrument, and you knew it before hand, who would hesitate to arrest that weapon from his hand? It was not possible to discuss such a question on narrow grounds. But he did not apprehend that the propriety or impropriety of that war had anything to do with the legal part of the question. They were not to decide on claims for compensation by looking back to the history of the justice or the injustice of the war. That question was to be decided on other principles. He knew that some persons considered the seizure of the Danish fleet an act of great aggression, but it would be a most unfortunate result for the country if they should lay it down as a principle that because in the opinion of a certain portion of the community hostilities were unjustifiable, that therefore parties thus situated should be entitled to compensation. Allusion had been made to a conversation stated to have taken place between Admiral Gambier and certain persons interested in these claims at the time the fleet were in the Baltic. It had been stated, that two persons asked the Admiral if they might not safely go up the Baltic, and that the Admiral had told them they might. Now that conversation had been mentioned thirty years after it was stated to have taken place, when Admiral Gambier was dead, and when the only witnesses to it were the persons interested in making the claims. He thought no one could doubt that such evidence was not sufficient to warrant them in coming to a decision on the subject, more especially when they had no knowledge of the dates when, or the circumstances under which such conversations took place. He knew that the Government had caused search to be made among the public documents, in order to discover if any could be discovered to justify the opinion that the Government of the day had misled the merchants, but no such document could be

found. He would, therefore, say, that neither the recent or previous motion, nor the justice or injustice of the war, formed any ground for granting compensation in the present instance. The next ground alleged was, that the English fleet was in the Baltic for a certain time, and had left it without protection. Now he (the Solicitor-general) presumed that those who were there were not in a situation in which facts so notorious and open to the public as the British fleet being in the Baltic and having the whole Danish fleet in its possession were not known to them. The very fact of its leaving the Baltic was too notorious for such a state of things, and the state of affairs was such that no individual could be without some knowledge of them, and ought not to have suffered property and goods to remain in those ships under an idea that circumstances would alter the position in which they were then placed, and that protection would be afforded them. Was it a ground for composition if any department of the Government of the day had left that or any part of the world without protection, whereby the property of individuals was hostilely seized? Was that a ground upon which the House could vote public money by way of compensation. Blame might be passed on such a Government for this neglect, but he did not recollect ever to have heard or read that, because protection had not been afforded in some parts of the world that those who had suffered by the neglect were to receive a compensation by a vote of that House. The complaint that protection had not been afforded had been repeatedly made and brought before the House; but he believed it had never been followed up by a vote of public money for compensation. Another ground urged was, that if the House thought fit to grant compensation for the loss sustained by the confiscation of the debts and goods ashore that it ought, therefore, to do equal justice and to extend compensation to ships and goods afloat. He believed that the House was induced to vote such compensation upon very distinct principles, On a public principle, not taken up for the occasion, but one that was supported by the books and authorities. After compensation had been afforded to those who had sustained losses in respect to what he had adverted, it was urged, on the part of the present claimants, that those individuals had no just claim. If it was true that the confiscation of goods on shore was



contrary to the law of nations—if that was true, said they, you granted compensation when the principle was not called for, for when you made your treaty with Denmark you made it to the effect that debts should not be recoverable, notwithstanding compensation; but that statement was never made to the House till long after the compensation was granted by the House. The House granted the compensation on the grounds he had stated, and it was urged by Sir James Mackintosh in the first instance, and that argument was afterwards granted by other hon. Members that the country had stipulated for the redress. Now, if that argument was well founded, the subsequent stipulation overrode the original claim. In that instance the House, in allowing compensation acted upon a distinct ground, but then it was stated, that though the House had granted compensation, and though the country had stipulated for the redress, that it could not be maintained, and it was subsequently stated that the subjects of this country did not desire it. He knew not how that might be, but he knew that many had applied for it. He repeated that the House had never sanctioned the principle on which the present claim was founded, and that the former claim had been granted on entirely different grounds. There was another fact which had been stated, and he apprehended it was one which had made a considerable impression on the House, and probably went far in inducing it to be acceded to the late motion upon the subject; it was this, that this country at the time had seized Danish property to a very great amount; and it was said that as we had, possessed ourselves of property amounting to upwards of one million sterling, the petitioners who had suffered by the acts of hostilities ought to be compensated out of that fund. That argument appeared plausible enough, but it rested upon precisely the same grounds as the claim which the subjects of a country might make for their losses they had sustained from an enemy, while they sought to be indemnified out of the property which the country had got as the fruits of the war. It did not appear to him that the proximity in point of date of the seizure of the Danish to the seizure of the British property in any respect affected the principle. It was no just ground of compensation that that country, in the course of its hostilities with another, acquired property of great value, that certainly was no ground for putting

forward a claim for compensation. Such a principle would lead to very extensive consequences, and very great embarrassment. The then Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Althorp) said, that these claims not having been made for thirty years afterwards, the fund had been long since exhausted, or if not, that a very small and insignificant sum remained available. Let not the House act upon the presumption that that country had had the benefit of a large surplus amount of property taken from the Danish nation beyond the payments appropriated to the subject. From his inquiries on the matter in order to ascertain what was his duty with respect to these claims, he had learned that no such fund now existed, and it would be a gross injustice to vote away the public money under the erroneous impression that such a fund was available. He believed he had stated the various arguments that had been urged in the discussions that had taken place on the subject. His hon. and learned Friend had referred to some authorities which he said sanctioned these payments. If his hon. and learned Friend thought there were any such authorities, let him point them out, for he had not been able to ascertain that such claims as the present were anywhere mentioned by the law of nations. If the Danish Government, in seizing the goods and ships, were in the course of legitimate warfare—if they committed that infraction according to the laws and rules by which the civilized nations conducted their warfare, then what was there in that case whereby, according to general principles, the sufferers were entitled to compensation at the public expense for losses sustained in the course of legitimate warfare. Nobody had ever attempted to deny that the warfare was legitimate on the part of the Danes. He heard the echo of the word legitimate. Probably an impression existed in the quarter from which that sound emanated that the warfare could not be legitimate on the part of the Danes, if that warfare was induced by a wrongful act on the part of our Government. The question was, had the Danes, in seizing the property, committed any act by which the claim of those who suffered was justified. Many persons differed as to the propriety of the act of this Government in commencing hostilities, but nobody had denied that the Danes were justified, if they thought fit, in seizing the property of the subjects of this country. It was of

great importance when that House voted large sums of money as compensation to persons standing in a situation analogous to that of the present petitioners, that the act should be intelligible on general principles. The House should not, in its votes, give rise to the probability of an opinion arising, that it was influenced by favour to this or that class of persons. The vote should be given on broad intelligible public principles. He was satisfied that if that came to be distinctly stated, his hon. Friend, who advocated the cause of those petitioners, would perceive that there was no just foundation for those claims. He therefore, had called the attention of the House to the facts, out of which those claims arose, and he certainly failed to discover any ground upon which this House would vote compensation in the present instance, which could not be advanced by any set of persons who might suffer by war. He did not think that those claimants suffered as much as the persons from whom Russia had made its immense seizure. He did not think it would be difficult to prove that the claims of those who suffered by the Russian seizure stood higher than the present claims. For it was more than doubtful that the Russians acted according to the laws of war when they seized the property he alluded to. He trusted the House would address its attention to those general public powers on which the claims of compensation was made, and say whether it was one which they could impartially and honestly grant. He would be the last man to stand in the way of compensation, if those individuals could sustain a well-founded claim. He thought no such grounds existed, and he hoped that the House would perceive that the first resolution adopted with respect to the claim, whereby it was rejected, was a fitting one; and that the last arose from some such cause, or the eloquence of the gentleman who advocated the claim. As there were no fresh grounds for sustaining the claim, he hoped the House would oppose going into committee on the question. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving as an amendment, that the House would resolve itself into a committee on that day three months.

Sir *Stratford Canning* wished to say a few words on this question. He considered the frequent discussions of this question and the votes to which the House had previously come respecting it, was a sufficient justification for the present motion—for

the House had already passed three subsequent votes on this subject, not in previous Parliaments, but during the existence of the present House of Commons. Without recurring to any previous knowledge of the proceedings he considered he was at least bound to support the votes he had given. After the House had gone this length it was for the Government to consider whether there were any circumstances such as would not warrant them to take those steps which could carry the votes of the House into effect. As on those former occasions he had voted with the majority he should vote with his learned Friend on the present occasion. He was well aware of the distinction the hon. and learned Solicitor-general had drawn between these claims, as related to one part of the property concerned and those which related to the other part. If he rightly understood the hon. and learned Gentleman he admitted that the former claims rested on this ground, that the Danes in confiscating this property had exceeded the law of nations. He was perfectly well aware of the peculiar relations between England and Denmark, at the breaking out of the war in the year 1807. That principle if fairly applied to other cases left this case an exception. With regard to the time he did not think the hon. and learned Gentleman's argument was valid, for the other claims that were satisfied were not brought forward until thirty years after they had accrued. It depended entirely upon the circumstances under which that war commenced, and he must be allowed to observe that this being established all that had been said about the danger of introducing bad precedents was set aside. It would appear that on that occasion the Danish government had thought it right to exercise what in the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite was a legitimate right, and they appeared to have exercised it with every wish to maintain pacific relations with us. We had showed our specific intentions by the armament we had sent out so as to take away from the Danes all excuse for resistance. It appeared that no embargo was made in this country till long after the squadron was withdrawn, and the merchants might have presumed that negotiations in the presence of so large a squadron would have had a peaceable effect, or at least have sufficed for their protection. These circumstances justified his hon. Friend in bringing forward the sub-

ject. There were great peculiarities in this case—peculiarities so great as to render persons concerned entitled to indemnity, to which, under other circumstances, they would not be entitled. If it were not for these extreme peculiarities, he should be one of the first to recognise the danger of acceding to these claims; but he felt that he was justified in giving his vote for this motion. Whatever might be their ulterior proceedings, he thought the House was bound to follow up the votes they had already given.

Mr. *Hume* said—Sir, this subject has been so often before the House, and so well argued by both parties, that I really do not consider that much time ought now to be occupied with it. I cannot but express my regret, that the learned Solicitor-general did not favour us on a former occasion with his views on this subject, that we might, in the first instance, have had the benefit of his learning and research, and an opportunity of looking into those facts to which he has alluded, although I must say I have not been able to discover any novelty nor much discrimination in what the hon. and learned Gentleman has addressed to the House. It is now nearly twenty years since I first took part in these discussions. On the first class the justice of the claim was still more manifest, but the same arguments which have been used by the learned Solicitor-general were urged against the first class. The House of Commons, however, decided in favour of the claim. The same arguments were adduced against the second class; and yet the House of Commons agreed to the vote. The same arguments have been brought against the third class; the matter has undergone considerable discussion, and three votes have been taken upon it. Sir, I am sorry that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have attempted to induce the House not to accede to this motion, by stating that the funds received from Denmark are now exhausted. We know full well that 1,200,000*l.*, came into the British Exchequer, and of this sum not more than 600,000*l.* has been paid. The interest alone would have doubled that amount. From the circumstance that the hon. and learned Gentleman has resorted to that threadbare argument, I infer that he is conscious that he has no other to urge. Let us not forget the circumstance which attended the commencement of the war. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his predecessors

in office, have contended that by admitting this claim you would be establishing a dangerous precedent. The war against Denmark was commenced in the most atrocious manner. Nothing but overpowering fear on the part of the British Government could have dictated it? Political feelings we have nothing to do with. I quite agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman, that when the Government had undertaken an expedition which they supposed to be necessary for the interest of Great Britain, it would have been improper to answer inquiries—"Are we going to war or not? May we trade or may we not?" If the Government had given such information they would undoubtedly have risked the success of the expedition. I do think that the circumstances which have been mentioned by the Solicitor-general, place the claimants, in this case, in a peculiar position, and make it almost impossible any similar case should occur. Considering what Parliament has already done, the long and elaborate discussion which has taken place, remarking that with reference to dates and facts the Opposition had been found defective; for although I do not recollect the whole of the dates alluded to by the hon. and learned Gentleman, I think the hon. Baronet who has spoken, stated very correctly that many, if not all of the seizures were made at a time when British subjects had a right to expect security. Under all these circumstances, I must say that it would only be an act of justice to these individuals who have suffered for so many years, that we should at last compensate them as far as we can for the losses to which they have been subjected. I hold them to be entitled to receive both the principal and the interest, but as the principal only is concerned, let us grant one part of the justice to which they are entitled. At any rate, I shall certainly vote, as I have done before, for going into committee, in order that justice may be obtained by these individuals.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, he was rather disposed to consent to the appointment of the committee than to divide the House on the question. He was determined that the matter should come fairly before the House. The parties had before stated, that they did not go for the money, but for the principle. It was now made a question of actual money. He did not think he need discuss the question at length as it had been exhausted by the

arguments of his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor-general, who had, he should say, completely demolished the case of the hon. and learned Member for Liverpool. He must complain that he had not on a former occasion been treated with courtesy by the hon. and learned Gentleman. He had applied to him when the question came last under the consideration of the House to defer the discussion in the absence of his hon. and learned Friends the Attorney and Solicitor general, considering that the debate could not well be conducted without them, the one of them being absent from business, and the other from illness; but the hon. and learned Gentleman refused to accede to the request, and he thought he had a right to complain of that. He would not, however, oppose the motion for going into committee, but he would take the opportunity of stating his views on the bringing up of the Report.

Mr. *Cresswell* was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman had complained of his want of personal courtesy towards him in a former debate.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer*: Yes, personal.

Mr. *Cresswell*: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell me the date?

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* said, that on the occasion of the last debate, on his asking the hon. and learned Gentleman to postpone it, in the absence of the law officers of the Crown, the hon. and learned Gentleman told him that he would not, and that he thought he was justified in not granting the request. He had, accordingly, brought forward the question, which left him (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) under the inconvenience of answering, in the absence of his hon. and learned Friends.

Mr. *Cresswell* said, that he had not the slightest recollection of the occurrence; but if it had taken place, he thought he was perfectly justified in taking such a course, because the subject had been argued on two occasions before. It had been argued under the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor by the Attorney and Solicitor general; and he had himself at that moment a note of the arguments they had used. He could not, therefore, understand why he should have been called on to put off a motion of the kind from day to day, and from night to night, while a number of persons, who had entrusted him with their case, were looking for justice. If, therefore, he had acted as was said, he was

justified in doing so. But after the House had twice affirmed the principle of the motion, and when increasing majorities had declared in favour of its principle, he should say the right hon. Gentleman had no reason to expect that he (Mr. *Cresswell*) should postpone its consideration in the absence of the law officers of the Crown. As, however, the right hon. Gentleman would not oppose the motion for going into committee, he would not allude further to the matter.

Sir *Charles Grey* distinctly recollected that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated in the former debate, that he was placed in a very inconvenient situation by the absence of his two hon. and learned Friends, and that another occasion for the discussion would be more convenient to himself; but he had not put it as a matter of personal favour to the hon. and learned Gentleman, who said, that as the matter had not been argued before, he would not consent to the request.

Mr. *Phillip Howard* said, that it appeared to him that his right hon. Friend bore too hard upon the hon. and learned Gentleman, because his right hon. Friend must be aware that it was his duty, as guardian of the public purse, to make the best defence which he could, while the hon. and learned Gentleman was equally justified in injuring his case. He had, on more than one occasion, voted against the right hon. Gentleman, but he did not see anything in his conduct which he could not applaud.

Amendment withdrawn.

Mr. *Estcourt* said, that as the committee was conceded, he would not occupy the time of the House with any discussion of the question.

Mr. *Warburton* thought the course suggested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer by far the most convenient one, since, before coming to a final decision, it would be well to have a discussion, in which the force of the arguments addressed to the House by the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Solicitor-general might be considered.

House in Committee: It was resolved, "That an humble address be presented to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty will be graciously pleased to take into consideration the Report, bearing date 12th May 1840, made by the Commissioners, to whom it was referred, to examine and adjudicate upon the claims of certain British subjects, for losses sustained by the

seizure and confiscation of their ships and cargoes by the Government of Denmark, in the year 1807; and that her Majesty will be pleased to advance to such claimants the amount of their respective losses as ascertained by the said Commissioners; and assuring her Majesty that this House will make good the same."

Address was agreed to.

House resumed, resolution to be reported,

**CHARITABLE TRUSTS.]** On the motion of Mr. J. Stewart, the Charitable Trusts Bill was read a third time, and several amendments made.

Sir E. Sugden objected to a clause which had been added on the recommitment of the bill, which suggested the existence of doubts as to the individuals in whom the estates of charitable trusts were legally vested. By the English Reform Act they were distinctly vested in the corporations. The name of the Attorney-general was endorsed on this bill; and he charged the hon. and learned Gentleman with endeavouring, by a side wind, to effect an object which was not within the purview of the bill. He begged to move the omission of the clause.

The Attorney-General considered that the clause to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman objected was a satisfactory one, and ought to be retained. It appeared that his right hon. Friend did not oppose the clause itself, but objected to the mode in which it had been introduced. The bill before the House related to charity trusts estates. The question was, whether the provision which was now opposed came within the scope of the bill, or was introduced clandestinely. The hon. Member knew that the clause was to be introduced. The bill was repeatedly printed. Ample opportunity was afforded the right hon. Member, if he had been disposed, to offer any opposition to the clause. He would explain shortly to the House the purport of the clause. When the Municipal Corporation Bill was under discussion it was thought expedient to retain what was termed the legal estates in the members of the old corporation up to a certain period, but no provision was made what should be done after that day. The period had elapsed, and nothing had been done. It was time that Parliament should legislate on the subject. It was stated by his right hon. Friend, that he doubted in whom the legal estates were now vested; but he (the At-

torney-general) entertained considerable doubts on that point. Many eminent lawyers, including the Lord Chancellor, agreed in these doubts. He considered the clause highly beneficial, and hoped his right hon. and learned Friend would withdraw his opposition to it.

Sir E. Knatchbull thought that the clause did not come within the general scope of the bill, and ought to form the subject of a distinct measure. That was the first time the clause had come under the notice of the House, and he hoped the motion of his right hon. and learned friend would be acceded to.

Mr. J. Stewart denied that the clause had been introduced without due notice. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had ample opportunity afforded him to make himself acquainted with the nature of the clause. The clause was of great importance. He had received several petitions from Bristol and Bridgewater, calling his attention to the difficulties which this clause was intended to obviate. The subject was also mentioned to him by several gentlemen of great legal attainments and experience connected with the Court of Chancery, who all approved of the propriety and necessity of a clause of that kind. He repudiated the charge of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that the clause was smuggled into the bill. He thought that, under the circumstances of the case, he and others, who supported the bill, were not open to such an imputation. The bill was one in which he took a great interest, and, considering it would have a most beneficial tendency, he hoped the House would reject the amendment, and allow the bill to be read a third time.

The House divided on the question, that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the bill:—Ayes 35; Noes 30:—Majority 5.

#### *List of the Ayes.*

Briscoe, J. I.  
Brotherton, J.

Hume, J.  
Humphery, J.

B  
B  
C  
C  
D  
F  
G  
G  
H  
H  
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Turner, E.	Wilde, Sir T.
Villiers, hn. C. P.	Williams, W.
Wakley, T.	TELLERS.
Warburton, H.	Attorney General
Wemyss, Captain	Stewart, J.

*List of the NOES.*

Arbuthnott, hn. H.	Lindsay, H. H.
Bagge, W.	Lockhart, A. M.
Bailey, J.	Mackenzie, T.
Baldwin, C. B.	Pakington, J. S.
Bramston, T. W.	Palmer, G.
Bruce, C. L. C.	Parker, R. T.
Clerk, Sir G.	Plumptre, J. P.
Cresswell, C.	Rae, rt. hn. Sir W.
Drummond, H. H.	Round, J.
Dugdale, W. S.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Filmer, Sir E.	Thesiger, F.
Fresfield, J. W.	Vernon, G. H.
Gaskell, J. Milnes	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Goring, H. D.	
Grimsditch, T.	TELLERS.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.	Knatchbull, Sir E.
Hodgson, R.	Sugden, Sir E.

Bill passed.

**SUPPLY.—MILITIA ESTIMATES.]** On the motion of Mr. *Macaulay*, the Militia Estimates were referred to a Committee of Supply.

House in Committee of Supply.

Mr. *Macaulay* moved, that a sum not exceeding 166,230*l.* be granted to her Majesty, to defray the charge of the embodied militia of Great Britain and Ireland for the year 1841-42.

Mr. *Hume* said, that, under the circumstances of the House, he should not oppose the vote, but he considered this expense altogether useless, and hoped that in a new Parliament it might be saved.

Resolution agreed to, the House resumed.

**WAYS AND MEANS.]** On the motion of the *Chancellor of the Exchequer*, the House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* moved the following grants to her Majesty:—6,200,000*l.* from the consolidated fund; 47,308*l.* 18*s.* surplus of grants of former years; 500,000*l.* transfer of aids.

Resolutions agreed to—House resumed.

**HOUSES OF INDUSTRY—IRELAND.]** On the question, that the report of the Houses of Industry (Ireland) Bill be brought up,

Sir E. *Knatchbull* complained that the Government had not kept good faith in bringing forward these bills, when it was fully understood from the declaration

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of the noble Lord (J. Russell) that no bill that was likely to be opposed should be proceeded with. The hon. Baronet alluded particularly to the Charitable Trusts Bill, to support which several Members of the Government had come down that evening, although it was known that his right hon. and learned Friend, the Member for Ripon, (Sir E. Sugden), and other hon. Members on that (the opposition) side of the House, entertained strong objections to many of its provisions.

Mr. *Macaulay* said, that Ministers had not attempted to proceed with any one of their own measures to which objection was likely to be urged, but that with regard to the bill to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded, it was not a Government measure, but had been introduced by an hon. and learned friend behind him (Mr. J. Stewart.) The Government were no parties to it, and any two Members of the Government might have voted opposite ways upon it.

Mr. *Pigot* said, the present bill was not a Government measure, and he understood there was no opposition to it.

Colonel *Sibthorp* complained of the disposition manifested by the Members of her Majesty's Government to hurry over measures at inconvenient hours, and he thought that his right hon. Friend had done no more than his duty in calling the attention of the House to such humbug. Ministers went about amusing themselves, instead of attending to the business of the country. A more idle and deceitful set of men were never allowed to fill such important offices, but he was resolved to follow them, and nothing should deter him from that which he believed to be his duty.

Mr. *F. Maule* said, that he should not take any notice of the observations which the House had just heard; they were below contempt. [*Order, order.*] He had been willing to go on with the Bribery Bill, but after the notice given by his noble Friend it was impossible.

Colonel *Sibthorp* having left the House,

Mr. *Williams Wynn* said, he could not help apprehending some unpleasant consequences from the words which had dropped from the hon. Gentleman opposite, and from what had been stated by the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just left the House—[cries of "*oh, oh.*"] Some hon. Gentlemen might, perhaps, treat the matter with ridicule, but he (Mr. Wynn) certainly did not consider it so lightly, and he, therefore, moved that the hon. Mem-

ber for Lincoln be directed to attend the House.

Motion agreed to, and the Sergeant went out for the purpose of serving the order upon the hon. Member.

Sir E. B. Sugden did not object to the motion, that the report on the Houses of Industry, &c. Bill be then received.

The Sergeant appeared at the Bar, saying that he had served the order of the House upon Colonel Sibthorp.

Mr. Hume inquired where?

The Sergeant: In the passage leading to the House of Commons.

The Speaker: Do you know where the hon. Member now is?

The Sergeant: In one of the committee-rooms of the House, I believe.

Sir E. Knatchbull then left the House, and speedily returned, accompanied by Colonel Sibthorp.

Mr. Speaker stated, that the House having been informed that the hon. and gallant Member for Lincoln had taken offence at an expression which had fallen from the hon. Member for Elgin, he felt called upon to state, that the expression had not escaped him; and that he had called the hon. Member to order at the time; and the hon. Member having recommenced his speech, without the words which had given offence to the hon. and gallant officer, he had considered that those words had, in fact, been retracted. Understanding, however, that the hon. and gallant Member for Lincoln was not satisfied that such was the case, it now became his duty to call upon the hon. Member to retract an expression which had given offence to another hon. Member.

Mr. Fox Maule stated, that he certainly meant to mark, as strongly as he could, his opinion of the language of the hon. Member, to the Members of the Government, and his hon. Friends around him; but if, in so doing, he had exceeded the limits of Parliamentary language, he felt bound at once to modify his expressions within those limits.

Col. Sibthorp said, in the course which he had taken, he was influenced by only one motive. He considered that he had a right to express his opinion with regard to the conduct of public men. He left the House as he always would do upon such an occasion; and, although he was ready to bow to the authority of the Chair, he must say, that the guardianship of the honour, and his character as a private man, should never be

from protecting that honour and that character, in the manner most consistent with his own feelings, and with his duty to the public. If he understood rightly, the hon. Gentleman had retracted the expression which he had made use of. If so, he (Colonel Sibthorp) was perfectly satisfied. But he thought he had a right to put it to the Chair, whether the words and imputations of the right hon. Gentleman had been wholly and entirely retracted.

The Speaker did not entertain the least doubt on the subject.

Sir R. Peel submitted to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, that the expression had been amply retracted, and that the hon. Gentleman opposite had made every fair concession. He trusted the hon. and gallant Gentleman would allow him (Sir R. Peel) to act as moderator, and that no fresh explanation would be called for.

Colonel Sibthorp said, that as that seemed to be the opinion of hon. Gentlemen who were most careful of the preservation of their honour, he should rest satisfied.

Mr. T. Duncombe was glad to hear that the hon. and gallant Gentleman was satisfied. But he heard the hon. and gallant Member say—

The Speaker said, the hon. Member would see that the affair had been concluded, and that it would be inexpedient to renew the subject.

Report received.

CLERK OF THE PEACE (LANCASTER).] On the question that the report upon the Lancaster Clerk of the Peace Bill be brought up,

Mr. Dugdale moved, that the bill be recommitted. He took up the subject in the absence of his hon. Friend, the Member for Warwick. The subject had not been sufficiently explained, and he thought that time ought to be given for the introduction of fresh clauses.

The Attorney-General was opposed to any unnecessary delay, and hoped that the proposition for recommitment would not then be pressed.

The House divided on the question, that the bill be recommitted: Ayes 51, Noes 50:—Majority 1.

#### List of the Ayes.

Adair, Viscount  
Ainsworth,  
Bathurst,  
By, J.  
Cris, J.

Bramston, T. W.  
Cruen, Colonel  
L. W.  
J. Y.  
St G.

Drummond, H. H.	Lygon, hon. General
Duncombe, hon. W.	Mackenzie, T.
Filmer, Sir E.	Nicholl, J.
Follett, Sir W.	Pakington, J. S.
Forester, hon. G.	Palmer, G.
Gaskell, J. Milnes	Parker, R. T.
Gore, O. W.	Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.
Goring, H. D.	Plumptre, J. P.
Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.	Rae, rt. hn. Sir W.
Grimsditch, T.	Richards, R.
Hamilton, Lord C.	Round, J.
Harcourt, G. G.	Rushout, G.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.	Sheppard, T.
Herries, rt. hon. J. C.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Hodgson, R.	Sotheron, T. E.
Holmes, hon. W.	Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.
A'Court	Thesiger, F.
Hope, hon. C.	Vernon, G. H.
Kirk, P.	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Knatchbull, right. hn. Sir E.	Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.
Lefroy, rt. hon. T.	TELLERS.
Lindsay, H. H.	Courtenay, P.
	Dugdale, W. S.

### List of the NOES.

Adam, Admiral	Muntz, G. F.
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.	O'Brien, W. S.
Barry, G. S.	Parker, J.
Briscoe, J. I.	Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.
Brotherton, J.	Philips, M.
Busfield, W.	Pigot, rt. hn. D.
Clay, W.	Roche, W.
Dalmeny, Lord	Rundle, J.
Duncombe, T.	Russell, Lord J.
Erie, W.	Scholefield, J.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.	Stansfield, W. R. C.
Greg, R. H.	Stewart, J.
Grey, rt. hn. Sir C.	Stuart, Lord J.
Guest, Sir J.	Stuart, W. V.
Heathcoat, J.	Thornely, T.
Hector, C. J.	Turner, E.
Hobhouse, T. B.	Villiers, hon. C. P.
Howard, P. H.	Wakley, T.
Hume, J.	Walker, R.
Humphery, J.	Warburton, H.
Lambton, H.	Wilde, Sir T.
Lushington, C.	Williams, W.
Lynch, A. H.	Wyse, T.
Macaulay, rt. hn. T.	TELLERS.
Macleane, D.	Maule, hon. F.
Marshall, W.	Campbell, Sir J.
Morris, D.	

Bill to be recommitted.

Mr. *Courtenay* moved, that it be an instruction to the committee to give compensation to the clerks of the justices of the peace for the borough of Manchester.

Mr. *M. Philips* opposed the motion. There had been no petition in favour of any such proposition, and it was deprecated by all parties in Manchester.

The House divided: Ayes 28, Noes 65; Majority 37.

### List of the AYES.

Arbuthnott, hon. H.	Macleane, D.
Bailey, J.	Nicholl, J.
Bruen, Colonel	Pakington, J. S.
Buller, Sir J. Y.	Palmer, G.
Clerk, Sir G.	Parker, R. T.
Drummond, H. H.	Plumptre, J. P.
Duncombe, hon. W.	Richards, R.
Filmer, Sir E.	Sheppard, T.
Forester, hon. G.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Gore, O. W.	Thesiger, F.
Grimsditch, T.	Waddington, H. S.
Hodgson, R.	Wilbraham, hon. B.
Kirk, P.	TELLERS.
Lefroy, rt. hn. T.	Courtenay, P.
Lygon, hon. General	Dugdale, W. S.

### List of the NOES.

Adam, Admiral	Marshall, W.
Ainsworth, P.	Maule, hon. F.
Baldwin, C. B.	Morris, D.
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.	O'Brien, W. S.
Barry, G. S.	Parker, J.
Briscoe, J. I.	Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.
Buck, L. W.	Peel, rt. hon. Sir R.
Busfield, W.	Rae, rt. hon. Sir W.
Campbell, Sir J.	Roche, W.
Clay, W.	Round, J.
Dalmeny, Lord	Rundle, J.
Gaskell, J. Milnes	Rushout, G.
Goring, H. D.	Russell, Lord J.
Greg, R. H.	Scholefield, J.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir C.	Stanley, Lord
Guest, Sir J.	Stansfield, W. R. C.
Hamilton, Lord C.	Stewart, J.
Harcourt, G. G.	Stuart, Lord J.
Heathcoat, J.	Stuart, W. V.
Hector, C. J.	Thornely, T.
Hepburn, Sir T. B.	Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Hobhouse, T. B.	Turner, E.
Holmes, W.	Villiers, hon. C. P.
Hope, hon. G.	Wakley, T.
Howard, P. H.	Walker, R.
Hume, J.	Warburton, H.
Humphery, J.	Wilde, Sir T.
Lambton, H.	Williams, W.
Lascelles, hon. W. S.	Wood, B.
Lindsay, H. H.	Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.
Lushington, C.	Wyse, T.
Lynch, A. H.	TELLERS.
Macaulay, rt. hon. T.	Philips, M.
Mackenzie, T.	Brotherton, J.

House went into committee.

Mr. *Ainsworth* moved, that the provisions of the bill be extended to Bolton.

Mr. *Grimsditch* opposed the motion, on the ground, that the charter of Bolton was in dispute.

The *Attorney-General* supported the motion, as it did not affect the point in dispute.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* thought this an improper time to bring forward the motion. — Motion negatived.



Mr. *Dugdale* moved, that a clause be brought up, to allow compensation to the clerks of the justices of the peace of the borough of Birmingham.

Mr. *Hume* opposed the motion. There was no proof before the House that the ratepayers of Birmingham, who would be saddled with the expense, had had any notice of the matter.

Clause brought up and agreed to.

The House resumed.

Report received.

Bill to be read a third time to-morrow.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.] The *Attorney-General* moved the further consideration of the report on the Administration of Justice (No. 1.) Bill.

Sir *E. Sugden* had expected that this bill would not come on again at so late a period of the Session, especially as it might have been passed long ago; nor did he consider that any inconvenience would accrue from letting it stand over to the next Session. It would seem, indeed, that the legislation on this measure had been resumed at distant intervals, for the purpose of prolonging the existence of the Administration; still he would not oppose the passing of the bill now, if the Government would adopt certain modifications which he meant to propose. He did expect, that after the vote upon the question of want of confidence the other night, the noble Lord would not have thought it desirable to pursue this measure any further, nor avail himself of the patronage which it must necessarily give her Majesty's Government in the distribution of those valuable appointments which would arise from it. The noble Lord should recollect, that he had put himself upon his trial, and that he had been tried by this House, and had been found, he would not say guilty, for he would not wish to make use of any word that could, by possibility, give the slightest offence—but the noble Lord, and his colleagues, had been tried by this House, and had been found wanting. The noble Lord was, however, now going to be tried by the country, and if he should succeed, then the measure which he (Sir *E. Sugden*) was about to propose, would not have the effect of throwing the slightest impediment in the way of the administration of justice, for Government could then carry forward their measure with a greater certainty of success, and with more credit to themselves. He proposed to postpone the

operation of the bill for a short time, and he should be greatly surprised if the noble Lord were to oppose this very reasonable proposition. The House must consider this demand to be only fair, when it considered the position in which the Government at present stood. If ever there was a time in which great caution should be observed in the appointment of officers to fill those judicial situations which this measure would create, it was the present. The House should remember, that the judges, when once appointed, remained in their several situations, although the Government that appointed them might be obliged to give up office. Was there then any man who felt an interest in the due and proper administration of justice, who would desire that the power of the Crown should be exercised over such institutions as the present bill comprehended, at the present moment, when the real administration of the country was to be immediately decided by an appeal to the people at large? He asserted, that the perfect exercise of those powers required the complete absence of prejudice upon the part of Government. With such observations, he begged leave to move the insertion of the following clause, "And be it enacted, that this Act shall commence, and have effect, on and after the 10th day of October next, except when a subsequent day is hereinbefore fixed."

Clause brought up, and read a first time; upon the motion, that it be read a second time,

Lord *J. Russell* had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have been satisfied with the obstacles which he had already offered to the passing of the bill; that the delays and inconvenience which the administration of justice had suffered, owing to the interposition of the right hon. Gentleman, would have induced him to refrain from further interposition, and raising new obstacles. The right hon. Gentleman might endeavour to throw upon him the blame of not passing the bill last Session, by alluding to certain rumours, but not referring to any distinct cause. But it was quite certain, that the bill, having the assent of Lord *Cottenham*, Lord *Lyndhurst*, Lord *Brougham*, and other high authorities in the House of Lords, having been supported by a great majority of that House, having also had the support of the legal authorities, generally speaking, on both sides in the House of Commons, the right hon. Gentleman at

the end of last Session, when the attendance of Members was thin, declared his determination to oppose the bill by every means in his power, and even, as he understood, to use the forms of the House to prevent its passing. Therefore he had found it necessary to postpone the Bill. In the present year, the right hon. Gentleman said, that he had not used extreme diligence for the purpose of passing the bill. It was easy to say that, with regard to any particular bill, without looking to the general state of the business before the House. There might be an urgent reason for proceeding with the army or navy estimates for instance, which would interfere with the other business. Now the right hon. Gentleman said, it would be most convenient for the administration of justice, that this bill should not take effect till the 10th of October. He could not conceive in what way. There were arrangements to be made for the sitting of the new courts, and he certainly could see no grounds for the right hon. Gentleman's opinion, if he understood him rightly, that it would be the most convenient to wait till the whole bar were assembled in term, and then appoint the judges, who should then learn, for the first time, that they were to fill the situations. But the right hon. Gentleman seemed to confess, that the real reason for which the right hon. Gentleman proposed the clause had nothing to do with the administration of justice. The right hon. Gentleman's real reason was, that the House had passed a vote of want of confidence in the present administration. That reason might be very good to the right hon. Gentleman, but it was one to which it was impossible for him to assent. It was impossible that he should assent to such a ground for postponement, without admitting, what, of course, he could not admit, that no appointment should be made; no act of the executive Government performed, because right hon. Gentlemen opposite had obtained a vote by a majority of one, on a resolution declaring a want of confidence in the present Administration. He denied the authority of that vote as an expression of the opinion of the country. He could not consent that the Administration of the executive government should be paralyzed until the time that the question as to the opinion of the country should be decided by a new Parliament. He could not admit the principle generally with regard to their carrying on the executive department of the Go-

vernment, and he certainly could not admit it with regard to the Court of Chancery. Was it to be said, that the Lord Chancellor of all persons holding office in this country, was the man most unfit to hold office; the man most unfit to give his opinion with regard to patronage; the man whom the House of Commons was to fix the brand of its distrust? With regard to the disposition of patronage, there had been occasions on which the Lord Chancellor, finding persons holding offices which he thought it desirable to abolish, and finding vacancies to which these persons might be appointed, had gladly taken the opportunity of recommending the appointment of such persons rather than others, causing thereby a saving to the public by the suppression of their former offices. He might mention the cases of Mr. Justice Erskine and Sir George Rose, to show the desire of the Lord Chancellor to choose persons, not, as the right hon. Gentleman supposed, from political considerations, but purely from their competency to fill the offices in which they were placed, and on account of the additional advantage to the public of the suppression of useless offices. These were voluntary actions on the part of the Lord Chancellor and on the part of the Government, not forced upon them by any vote of that House, or any necessity whatever. Yet the right hon. Gentleman could come forward and say, when a bill was passing through the House which, by the confessions of all, would be for the benefit of the public, which would prevent further arrears, and relieve existing suitors, which would put an end to many evils, notorious and not denied; that, having such a bill before them, they should take the opportunity of fixing a brand on the Lord Chancellor. He could take no other view of the clause of the right hon. Gentleman. He thought the right hon. Gentleman did not veil his purpose. The right hon. Gentleman did not say, that in consequence of the vote of the House expressing its want of confidence in the Government, the disposal of all patronage should be postponed, but he selected this particular case; and where the person to be consulted, and by whose opinion the Government would be guided, was Lord Cottenham, the Lord Chancellor. He happened to have had a conversation with the Lord Chancellor last year relative to the disposal of these offices, and he could venture to assure the House, that the recommendation of the Lord

Chancellor would be given entirely with a view to the better administration of justice in the Court of Chancery, and the improvement of the equity jurisdiction, and from no other motive whatever. This was the opinion of the Lord Chancellor, and it would be the opinion of the Government. It would be the opinion of Lord Melbourne, and of all the Members of the Administration. Therefore the recommendation of the right hon. Gentleman opposite was nothing else than saying, "We have triumphed by a majority of one, and we shall take the opportunity it gives us to say, that Lord Cottenham is unfit to exercise the power of disposing of this patronage." Yet the right hon. Gentleman himself said, he had no fault to find with the disposal of equity patronage by the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor had been hitherto respected by all for the ability with which he had presided over his administration of justice, for the patient attention which he gave to all that came before him, and for the clearness, uprightness, and learning of his judgments; but the right hon. Gentleman now proposed, that the House of Commons should condemn him, because upon a party vote the other side had succeeded by a majority of one. If the right hon. Gentleman succeeded again, he must submit to the majority, but he never would voluntarily take any share in fixing such a brand on the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. *Richards* expressed his perfect satisfaction with the appointments which had been made in the Court of Chancery. He believed there was no one who objected to any of those appointments. He had come down prepared to oppose the motion of his right hon. Friend, the Member for Ripon, thinking its object was to get rid of the bill altogether; but from his (Mr. *Richards*) situation in the Court of Exchequer, he could say that the proposed delay would cause no impediment in the business of the court, and therefore he should support the proposition of his right hon. Friend.

Sir *R. Peel* said, if for a moment it could be inferred, that by his vote on this occasion he meant to imply distrust of the character or integrity of the present Lord Chancellor, he would be extremely cautious how he gave a vote which should have the semblance of sanctioning such a censure. If the object of the present motion were attempted to have been carried by means of an address to the Crown,

which, after reciting, that the House had agreed to a vote expressive of want of confidence in her Majesty's present Ministers, had appealed to the Crown to prevent these appointments consequent upon the bill from taking place, he should not have supported such an address by his vote, because it would appear as if he distrusted the exercise of the Government of the patronage which they at present possessed. But the case before the House was a totally different one. The present bill established a new court, and made a new judicial arrangement altogether, with which the executive government as yet had nothing whatever to do. It possessed as yet no patronage under the bill, therefore it could not be said, that any precautionary vote of that House robbed the executive of any such patronage. The noble Lord admitted, that the meeting and the votes of the Parliament about to be forthwith called was to settle the great question, and decide upon the existence of the present Ministry as constituting the Government of the country; was it then unreasonable that the operation of such a bill as this, and the nomination of the high officers under it, should be postponed, as his right hon. Friend had suggested, until the country could fairly know whether it had a Government possessing its confidence or not. If the noble Lord allowed the bill to be withdrawn, in consequence of his objection to this limitation of its operation, he promised the noble Lord the full benefit of his support, should he make this one of the first bills, which, on his re-assembling Parliament, he should bring before the Legislature; and, considering the sanction it had met in the upper House, there could be no doubt in the noble Lord's mind, that the bill must pass during the Session immediately following the present. The only reason why his right hon. Friend (Sir *E. Sugden*) did not oppose the progress of the bill altogether, and why he had limited his motion to the present object, was, that his right hon. Friend was apprehensive, that by opposing the bill the country might receive detriment by the postponement of the meditated improvements in the administration of justice; or that the bill might not pass in time to secure to the country the benefit of the alteration introduced under the auspices of the present Government. But if the noble Lord really presumed upon having the support of the country, and carrying this measure in the House about

to be called together, he had no objection to assure him that the decision of the House generally should draw with it his compliance and support in respect to this measure, and the appointments under it. He would just ask the noble Lord to deal out the same measure of justice to him, that he sought for himself, and suppose that this was a case when he was in the Government, as in 1835; and, without having before him, as a stumbling-block in the way, a vote of want of confidence, as in the present instance, there had been introduced by him (Sir R. Peel) a great measure like this, affecting the administration of justice, to which he asked the assent of the noble Lord and his Friends, what would be their answer? They would naturally answer no; they would reply very properly, "Prove to us, first, that you have the confidence of the House of Commons, and we may comply." The noble Lord had confessed that, in the present state of things, the Government ought not to attempt to propound the change in the existing Corn-law system, because it was a measure of such extreme importance; also that it should not, for the same reason, proceed with the Poor-law bill. He was disposed, for the same reasons as operated upon the Government itself in those cases, to say in this they ought not to insist on the bill coming into operation till after the meeting of the next Parliament. His vote was founded upon a reluctance to invest Government, not with the patronage that resulted to it from holding the Government, but from a reluctance to grant it patronage, which was to be the result of an act of Parliament, not yet passed. To the measure he had given his assent, because it had the assent of all the persons of all parties most competent to decide upon its merits. If the noble Lord could say he felt that he would be in a situation to pass it in the Parliament which was to be called together as early as they had a right to expect its re-assembling, he would suggest, that let this be the first act of the next Session, and both he and his right hon. Friend would be perfectly content. If the noble Lord did not choose that course, and preferred driving them to oppose the bill because he would make no concession as to the period when those appointments should take place, let not the noble Lord blame him or his right hon. and learned Friend as having stood in the way of a great improvement in the system of the administration of justice.

Mr. Labouchere could not avoid rising to protest against the doctrine of the right hon. Baronet, as most novel and unconstitutional. He never heard of such a course as that of passing a bill giving patronage, and at the same time depriving the Ministers of the Crown, of the right of exercising it. If this was done for three months, it might be done for three years. He trusted the House would not sanction so dangerous a principle.

Sir E. Sugden, in explanation, said that he had not the slightest intention of casting any imputation on the Lord Chancellor.

Mr. Hume said, that the hon. Gentleman might as well have said at once, "we want to have the nomination of the judges ourselves, and we don't choose to leave it to you." There was no analogy between this case and that of the Corn-laws. The present bill had received the sanction of both Houses, and the natural course was to pass it without any unusual conditions. The Corn-law question was much disputed, and the reason for not bringing it forward did not at all apply to the present case. This was entirely a party motion, and party feeling never appeared in a stronger light. The House divided, on the question that the clause be read a second time:—Ayes 101; Noes 83; Majority 18.

#### List of the AYES.

A'Court, Captain	Dugdale, W. S.
Adare, Viscount	Duncombe, hon. W.
Alexander, N.	Duncombe, hon. A.
Antrobus, E.	Eaton, R. J.
Arbuthnot, hon. H.	Egerton, Sir P.
Archdall, M.	Eliot, Lord
Ashley, Lord	Estcourt, T.
Bagot, hon. W.	Filmer, Sir E.
Bailey, J.	Forester, hon. G.
Bateson, Sir R.	Gaskell, Jas. Milnes
Blackburne, I.	Gore, O. W.
Blackstone, W. S.	Goulburn, rt. hn. H.
Bramston, T. W.	Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.
Broadley, H.	Grimditch, T.
Buck, L. W.	Grimston, Viscount
Buller, Sir J. Y.	Hamilton, Lord C.
Burrell, Sir C.	Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.
Calcraft, J. H.	Hawkes, T.
Canning, rt. hn. Sir S.	Heneage, G. W.
Chapman, A.	Henniker, Lord
Clerk, Sir G.	Hepburn, Sir T. B.
Cochrane, Sir T. J.	Herries, rt. hn. J. C.
Corry, hon. H.	Hodgson, R.
Cresswell, C.	Hope, hon. C.
Darby, G.	Hotham, Lord
Dick, Q.	Ingestrie, Viscount
Douglas, Sir C. E.	Inglis, Sir R. H.
Drummond, H. H.	Jones, J.

Jones, Captain  
Knatchbull, right hon.  
Sir E.  
Lascellas, hn. W. S.  
Law, hon. C. E.  
Lefroy, rt. hon. T.  
Lincoln, Earl of  
Lindsay, H. H.  
Lowther, Viscount  
Lowther, J. H.  
Mackenzie, T.  
Maclean, D.  
Mahon, Viscount  
Neeld, J.  
Neeld, J.  
Nicholl, J.  
Norreys, Lord  
Packer, C. W.  
Pakington, J. S.  
Palmer, G.  
Parker, R. T.  
Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.  
Pemberton, T.  
Plumptre, J. P.  
Pringle, A.

Rae, rt. hn. Sir W.  
Reid, Sir J. R.  
Richards, R.  
Round, J.  
Rushbrooke, Colonel  
Rushout, G.  
Sheppard, T.  
Shirley, E. J.  
Sibthorp, Colonel  
Somerset, Lord G.  
Sotherton, T. E.  
Stanley, Lord  
Sturt, H. C.  
Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.  
Theinger, F.  
Thompson, Mr. Ald.  
Vere, Sir C. B.  
Waddington, H. S.  
Walsh, Sir J.  
Wilbraham, hon. B.  
Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.

## TELLERS.

Holmes, W.  
Fremanile, Sir T.

*List of the NOES.*

Adam, Admiral  
Archbold, R.  
Bannerman, A.  
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.  
Barry, G. S.  
Berkeley, hon. C.  
Bodkin, J. J.  
Briscoe, J. I.  
Brocklehurst, J.  
Brotherton, J.  
Buller, E.  
Busfield, W.  
Campbell, Sir J.  
Childers, J. W.  
Clay, W.  
Craig, W. G.  
Dalmeny, Lord  
D'Eyncourt, rt. hon.  
C. T.  
Ellis, W.  
Evans, Sir De L.  
Evans, W.  
Fazakerley, J. N.  
Ferguson, Sir R. A.  
Fitzpatrick, J. W.  
Grey, rt. hn. Sir C.  
Grey, rt. hn. Sir G.  
Guest, Sir J.  
Hawes, B.  
Hayter, W. G.  
Henthcoat, J.  
Hector, C. J.  
Hindley, C.  
Hobhouse, T. B.  
Howard, P. H.  
Hume, J.  
Labouchere, rt. hn. H.  
Lambton, H.  
Listowel, Earl of  
Lushington, rt. hn. S.

Lynch, A. H.  
Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.  
Marshall, W.  
Maule, hon. F.  
Morpeith, Viscount  
Morris, D.  
Muntz, G. F.  
Noel, hon. C. G.  
O'Brien, C.  
O'Ferrall, R. M.  
Paget, Colonel  
Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.  
Pechell, Captain  
Pendarves, E. W. W.  
Pigot, rt. hn. D.  
Power, J.  
Price, Sir R.  
Rice, F. R.  
Roche, W.  
Rundle, J.  
Russell, Lord J.  
Rutherford, rt. hn. A.  
Sheil, rt. hn. R. L.  
Smith, R. V.  
Stansfield, W. R. C.  
Stewart, J.  
Stuart, Lord J.  
Stuart, W. V.  
Strutt, E.  
Thornely, T.  
Troubridge, Sir E. T.  
Villiers, hon. C.  
Wakley, T.  
Warburton, H.  
Ward, H. G.  
Wilbraham, G.  
Wilde, Sir T.  
Williams, W.  
Winnington, Sir  
Wood, C.

Wood, G. W.  
Wood, B.  
Wyse, T.  
Yates, J. A.

## TELLERS.

Stanley, E. J.  
Parker, J.

Lord J. Russell said, he was sorry to find his opinion upon the subject was different from that of the majority of the House, but, after the vote which had passed, he certainly could not consent to be a party to proceeding with the bill, and he would, therefore, move that the further consideration of the report be postponed to that day three weeks.

Sir E. Sugden said, the noble Lord was at liberty to take his own course, and, for his part, he found no fault with it. He would merely assure the noble Lord that, if he had the honour of a seat in the new Parliament, he would support the bill by every means in his power.

Sir De Lacy Evans said, that it appeared as if a bill of great importance to the public was about to be refused, because there was a chance that some patronage would fall to the lot of the Government. He hoped that fact would go forth to the public. He hoped so, though he might be wrong in his estimate of public opinion. But he considered it to be a matter of importance, and he hoped it would be marked there, as it would be elsewhere, that the present was a Parliament of monopolists, who had only given still further flagrant proofs of the partisanship by which it was animated.

Lord Stanley: I am not content that the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member, should go forth to the public without an answer. He says, that the motion of my right hon. Friend (Sir E. Sugden), will have the effect of preventing the enactment of a measure to remove existing abuses, but I will tell him that the effect of that motion, had it not been for the course which her Majesty's Government have thought proper to pursue, would not have postponed for a single instant the beneficial operation of that measure. I will tell him that this act could not have come into operation for any beneficial purpose until the commencement of the term after the long vacation—until the 1st of November.

the 10th of October—a fortnight or more before the act could under any possibility come into practical operation—not only without one word of opposition or without the delay of a single moment, but with the cordial approbation and concurrence of all parties, the Government of the country—the hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they then were the Members of the Government, would exercise the power of the Crown, by making those judicial appointments which they have long contended are so desirable. But the House has decided that these important functions shall not be exercised by a Ministry which it has itself declared to be at present in abeyance, by a Ministry which is now holding office only under the condition of resignation, that is, only holding office until the opinion of the country has been pronounced either in their favour or against them. By the amendment of my right hon. Friend, we have once again declared that her Majesty's Ministers are not capable of exercising the functions necessarily attaching to the executive Government of the country; and, holding this opinion, we were bound to oppose their performance of those functions in a case where no detriment could possibly arise to the public service. If, before the time mentioned in the motion of my right hon. Friend, the hon. Gentlemen opposite are in possession of that power of which they are not now in possession then they, of course, will perform this amongst the other duties of the Government; and by the course we have to-night pursued we shall have deprived ourselves of all power of opposition or objection. The noble Lord, and no one else, is preventing the progress of this measure. The delay—the impediment—is caused alone by the course which he is pursuing; but, notwithstanding the step he has taken, if he calls the Parliament together at a time at which we have a right to expect it, he will still be in time to introduce a new bill in the terms of my right hon. Friend's motion, and will then be able to appoint these officers without the slightest opposition on our part.

Mr. Labouchere said, that the speech of the noble Lord, had confirmed the impression which was formerly produced upon his mind, that the House had established a doctrine equally novel and dangerous. The course which hon. Gentlemen opposite had pursued, they had not attempted to justify by the production of a single precedent. They had attempted to lay down the doc-

trine that for certain purposes they were to legislate on the principle of putting in abeyance the ordinary executive functions of the Crown, for it was a mere quibble to pretend to draw any distinction between the patronage conferred under that act, and the ordinary patronage at the disposal of the Crown. The House had again and again declared, that, it was fitting that these appointments should be made; but it now declared that it would prevent these appointments from being made at certain times, and under certain circumstances. Such a doctrine as that which had now been laid down he had heard with surprise proceeding from Tory benches. In the time of the greatest party violence such a doctrine he had never heard, even from those who entertained the most extreme opinions on his side of the House; and the hon. Gentlemen opposite would ere long regret the course which they had that night pursued. He had heard with great regret the speech of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth—a speech, he must say, the most contrary and opposed to his usual doctrine. He had always appeared to be especially tender of any infringement on the powers of the executive Government, and yet he now defended the adoption of a course by which a most unconstitutional attack was made against them. He must repeat that, he rejoiced that his noble Friend, in taking his choice of the alternative left to him, had determined not to expose the prerogative of the Crown to an attack equally unprecedented and unconstitutional.

Mr. Villiers said, that no Government of common sense or common feeling would submit to the humiliation to which the motion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir E. Sugden) exposed them. The object of that motion was to prevent the bill from coming into operation. It was admitted that a denial of justice necessarily took place from the want of such measure, and yet, by the conduct of hon. Gentlemen opposite, that denial of justice to the people of England was maintained and persisted in. The noble Lord (Lord Stanley) had said, that the bill could be passed by the new Parliament. On what grounds did the noble Lord make such a statement? How could the noble Lord know in what manner a new Parliament might think fit to act? Yet this was the universal practice! The noble Lord said, that he should do one thing, and the right hon. Baronet intimated his intention of

doing another. The noble Lord answered for some measures, and the right hon. Baronet for others; but on what security could they make these statements, or give these promises? Never was a greater satire inflicted on the system of representation. He knew not who would be the Members of the ensuing Parliament, and he would now give this notice to the public that, in consequence of the conduct of hon. Gentlemen opposite, there was a great chance that the existing evils would not be remedied—that these judges would not be appointed. For years there had been a great struggle between various individuals and opposite parties on the expediency of this measure. That struggle was now at an end; and when it was so—when the incalculable inconvenience and loss inflicted on the people was about to be done away with—then hon. Gentlemen opposite must interfere and prevent the accomplishment of so desirable an object. There never had been a single instance in which the public had more right to feel themselves aggrieved. And whence did the conduct of the opposite party arise? From their interested and violent opposition to any alteration of the Corn-laws. In consequence of their determination not to discuss, consider, or change those hateful laws, this House was to be dissolved, this beneficial measure rejected, and everything disturbed.

Mr. Pemberton agreed with the hon. Gentleman that the country had great reason to complain of the course which had been adopted with respect to this measure; but against which party would that complaint be directed? His noble Friend (Lord Stanley) had said, that the amendment which had been proposed that night would not impede or in any way interfere with the beneficial operation of the present measure, and every one at all acquainted with the administration of justice in the Court of Chancery must acknowledge that that statement was a just one. He (Mr. Pemberton) had always supported, had always been anxious for the passing of this bill; and he had even blamed the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) for his withdrawal during the last Session, without, as he thought, any fair or sufficient reason. Yet upon him, and upon those with whom he thought and acted, the blame of impeding its progress was now most unwarrantably thrown. They were accused of preventing this measure from becoming law by hon. Gentlemen opposite, yet what had been the

course which they themselves followed under similar circumstances? In 1836, the Duke of Wellington introduced a bill appointing an additional Vice-Chancellor, yet, that bill, effecting the same object and brought forward for the same purpose as the present they had most violently opposed. In 1836, also, the King's speech said, that an improvement in the administration of justice in the Courts of Equity was a main object to be considered by Parliament; and yet from that time, 1836, until 1840, what step had the Government—what step had any individual of the hon. Gentlemen opposite taken? They had done nothing whatever during that time. In 1840 the present bill was introduced into the House of Lords, and it was sent down into this House in the July of that year. In the course of the Session it was withdrawn by the Government without any cause; and during this Session when it had been again brought forward, it was unnecessarily postponed; and now, when no obstacle was thrown in the way of its enactments and of its beneficial operation—when it was ripe to be passed, it was again given up by the noble Lord. The House must recollect that the bill not only contained the appointment of the new judges, but it also included the appointment of the registrars and the other officers necessary to the constitution of a Court of Law. These could not be appointed until after the 14th of August, and then it was well known that the Court did not sit again until the 2nd of November, the first day of the term after the long vacation. He protested against the observations of hon. Gentlemen opposite. The inconvenience of the course adopted by the noble Lord would, of course, extend the delay which must take place before the bill could again be passed; but when the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Villiers) talked against the bill passing at all in the next Parliament, he would ask him who prevented it from passing in this? The blame and responsibility rested, not with those on that side of the House, but with the noble Lord and hon. Gentlemen who supported him.

Mr. Wakley did not think the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) could, as a Minister of the Crown, proceed with the bill, under the present circumstances, and he begged to remind the House, that the outrageous proceedings which had given rise to the noble Lord's motion, did not originate on the Radical side of the House. He, for

his part, had always considered the Radicals to be the true Conservative party in that House, and the night's proceedings had confirmed him in that view; for the Radicals had never made such attacks on the prerogative of the Crown as he had had the fortune to witness within the last three weeks in that House, and he was prepared to prove this assertion by reference to facts. If the conduct of the two parties, as lately developed, continued much longer, his conviction was, that the hours of the Monarchy would be numbered. The millions out of doors were disgusted with what passed in a place where, though it was pretended to be for their benefit, they had no representatives. When the people petitioned for the relaxation of the prerogative, or its exercise in favour of their champions, they were told it was better to leave such matters in the hands of the executive: that was the language of the right hon. Baronet, the Member for Tamworth. But when party interests became involved, the prerogative was made a shuttlecock of, and no more respect was paid to it than to a dirty rag. As a Radical, he was always prepared to say, he respected the throne, the prerogative of the Crown, and the Monarchy. No sort of Government suited the people of England better; and none had ever heard him say otherwise. But he must say, that he looked upon the result of the present proceedings as likely to be highly disastrous, unless the people saw more respect paid to the prerogative on the part of those who talked so largely about it. He only begged to ask, in conclusion, if the leading party in that House treated the Crown in that manner, what would be the conduct of an excited multitude abroad with respect to that same Crown which they had so insulted?

Sir R. Peel thought it was quite evident that the real cause of that apparent interference which had been ascribed to them at his side of the House, was neither more nor less than the attempt which had been made by the hon. Gentlemen opposite to carry on the executive Government of the country when they did not possess the power to do so. There had been clearly no other course for that Government to pursue, when the House of Commons had so decidedly declared that it did not possess their confidence, than that of resignation or immediate dissolution. By immediate dissolution he did not mean that dissolution which would interfere with

those grants which were necessary to conduct the public service, or which might prevent the passing of those legislative acts which enabled them to levy the ordinary duties. But he did say, no conceded motion of any kind, no act of the House of Commons implying confidence in the Government, should be passed after such a vote as it had come to. While a Ministry was placed in such a position as the present, it was an anomalous, extraordinary, and unprecedented thing of them to come forward, as on the present measure, to ask for a vote of confidence from that House. It was perfectly impossible that a Government could be so conducted. It was impossible that the House could agree to a measure, by which such a devolution of authority took place as would imply that they still possessed the confidence of that House. If they passed such a measure, would not the Gentlemen opposite, and every one besides, say such conduct was most inconsistent. Were they to confirm, by new legislative enactments—were they to place upon new grounds, the authority of the present Government, as was proposed by the present bill, he was perfectly convinced they at his side of the House would be taunted by the Gentlemen opposite with their inconsistency, and that they had not drawn the ordinary distinction between the prerogative of the Crown and power conferred for the first time. If that precedent was to be resorted to—if that Government which, not only being in a minority, but which had not even the power to carry one of its measures, called upon them for a new vote of confidence, then he certainly thought the House could not consent to it with any degree of consistency. The hon. Gentleman opposite (the Member for Finsbury), who had just addressed the House, complained a good deal of the interference, which he ascribed to them, with the prerogative of the Crown. Now, they claimed something also for the prerogative of the House of Commons. They claimed the right, when an act was proposed enabling the Government to make certain appointments, of considering whether these appointments were to be made on the 15th of October or the 15th of August. It was, indeed, a new doctrine, that which the hon. Gentleman opposite propounded—namely, that the House of Commons was not at liberty to express its opinion with respect to a mere legislative enactment, and to exercise its own discretion on such a question as



that then before them. So far from thinking the prerogative of the Crown in danger, as seemed to be the opinion of the hon. Gentleman opposite, he (Sir R. Peel) never recollected a time when it was more respected; and he certainly could not entertain any alarm for the Throne, because the House of Commons claimed for itself the right of substituting the 15th of October, instead of the 15th of August. No man would be more disposed to uphold the prerogatives of the Crown than he would; but if a Ministry, without the confidence of the House of Commons, would endeavour to carry on the affairs of the country, they must be prepared to meet with obstructions, and to be thwarted in their measures. It was not alone, because they who were in the majority in that House claimed for themselves the privileges which they did, that the present course was adopted; but it was also because they felt that those who, being situated like the present Government, did not pay proper homage to the true principles of a representative Government, if they continued not only to administer the executive functions, but proposed to the House of Commons new legislative enactments, implying confidence in themselves.

Mr. *Hawes* thought it would have been a more manly course for hon. Gentlemen opposite to have declared before then the course they meant to pursue. They had not objected to other legislative measures, but their present course was evidently nothing but a shabby scramble for patronage.

Mr. *B. Wood* asked the hon. Gentlemen of the Opposition what the people of England would think of the integrity of their judges when their appointment was made a subject for party contention?

Further consideration of the report postponed.

DEBTS OF PARISHES BILL.] Sir E. Knatchbull moved the Committal of the Debts of Parishes Bill.

Mr. *F. Maule* wished to know, before assenting to this bill, what the object of it was?

Sir E. *Knatchbull* replied that his object was to provide for the payment of debts incurred by parishes before the passing of the Poor-law Bill.

Mr. *B. Wood* said, those debts might have been contracted a hundred years ago, and it was, in his opinion, very unjust to

saddle the new occupiers with the payment of these debts. He should move that this bill be postponed to that day six months.

Mr. *Darby* maintained that the continuance of the payment of the interest of these debts by the parishes was a proof that they coincided in the opinion that they were legal.

Mr. *Warburton* maintained, that the investigation of these alleged facts was necessary, and that a committee was the only proper tribunal for adjudicating upon them.

Sir E. *Knatchbull* said, that the present bill had received the sanction of all parties at the commencement of the Session, and not only the Poor-law Commissioners but the Government had agreed to it. He would give one instance, whereby they would see the necessity for the bill. A certain parish had been informed that its poor were entitled to a certain disputed property, and they had obtained a loan for the purpose of meeting the expense of prosecuting their rights at law. They had succeeded, and were then in possession of the property, but since the passing of the new Poor-law Act the commissioners had conceived that they had no right to authorise the payment either of the principal or interest of the money so advanced. Cases of that description were frequently occurring.

Mr. *Hawes* observed, it was not usual to take the views of the Poor-law Commissioners from the other side of the House. He thought it would be better that the debate be adjourned to Friday.

Mr. *Hume*: Even supposing that petitions were before the House demanding this bill, the facts contained in them should be submitted to a committee.

Committee adjourned to Friday.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, June 10, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time.—New South Wales; Western Australia; Insolvent Debtors (Ireland); House of Industry (Ireland); Administration of Justice; Court of Chancery.—Read a second time.—Tithe Composition (Ireland).—Read a third time.—Court Houses (Ireland); Assessed Taxes Composition; Vaccination; Ordnance Survey; Militia Ballots Suspension.  
Petitions presented. By the Earls of Devon, and Yarborough, from Devonshire, Cornwall, and Lincolnshire, against a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Brougham, and the Marquess of Lansdowne, from Perth, and various other places in Scotland, and from Swansea, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.

THE PRESIDENT STEAM-VESSEL.] Vis-

count *Strangford* said, that their Lordships were aware of the interest which prevailed in the public mind on the subject of the President steam-ship, and he wished to know, whether the Government had sent out any vessel in quest of her, for the purpose of ascertaining her fate, and, if possible, of affording her succour. He understood the Portuguese government had been humane enough to do something of the kind.

The Earl of *Minto* said, that the Admiralty had watched the reports concerning the President with the greatest interest, and endeavoured to obtain all the information in their power, and had collected the best evidence from all descriptions of persons as to any means by which we could discover the fate of the vessel, or afford her succour. The Admiralty, however, had been compelled to come to the conclusion, that there were no means of search having the slightest probability of obtaining information or affording relief. A fresh report has been circulated to-day through the newspapers, which was calculated, he feared, to excite false hopes. The report states, that a large steamer in distress had been seen in St. George's Channel. There was no doubt, information to that effect had reached town, and he had, in consequence, sent instructions to the admiral at Plymouth to despatch a steamer, in order to ascertain whether there was any foundation for the report. He, however, had no reason to believe, that the report would prove well-founded, and he feared it was only one of those most odious and incomprehensible attempts to take advantage in the money market of the temporary hopes excited by favourable rumours.

**TIMBER DUTIES—CORN-LAWS—THE POOR-LAW.]** Lord *Ashburton* having presented a petition from shipowners and others of South Shields, against the alteration of the timber duties, observed, that the financial plan of the Government was a gross delusion to say that the deficiency in the Budget could be made up by relieving the country of a large portion of the taxation upon timber, sugar, and corn. The proposition, as regarded timber, was not one for reducing the taxation upon that article, but by additional taxation to raise the sum of 700,000*l.* The higher taxation upon colonial timber was to be accompanied by a comparative reduction upon Baltic timber, but the whole taken together was an additional taxation, and a

taxation too upon that particular kind of timber which was used in all the manufacturing districts in the country. It was colonial timber which was used upon the whole western coast of England; it was the timber which was most generally used for the dwellings of the poor, and it was the cheaper of the two. The Government, therefore, by their proposition, were about to offer to the country, not a cheaper, but a dearer timber. That they could get nothing from the proposed alteration in the sugar duties was obvious. Indeed, it had been admitted by those who had made the proposal in the other House, that a fraction of a farthing was the amount of the benefit which might result to the consumer from that proposed alteration. Now, whether his noble and learned Friend opposite (Lord Brougham) would think that for so small an advantage, if so it could be called, they ought to sacrifice that great principle for which his noble and learned Friend had so long struggled, and for which the country had so dearly paid, he did not know; but he hoped, that before the Session was closed, his noble and learned Friend would declare what his opinions were upon the subject. He was sure, that his noble and learned Friend's sagacious mind was at least convinced of this, that there could be no doubt, if the British markets were thrown open to Brazilian sugar, that the slave trade would be increased in its most horrible and disgusting form; and by making it a smuggling trade they would increase all its horrors tenfold: wretched beings would then be stowed just as a coasting smuggler stowed his spirits. The blood ran cold on reading the accounts published of vessels taken in that traffic. He was surprised, that the noble Lord had allowed so long a time to elapse without expressing his indignation at the encouragement proposed to be given to slavery. With respect to corn, the measure amounted to this—that, whereas for the last three years you had imported corn largely, paying a duty of 5*s.* 9*d.* the quarter, by the alteration you would have to pay 8*s.* The whole of the measures proposed were of this description; there could not be a greater delusion. He would take this opportunity of adverting to the observation which fell from his noble and learned Friend the day before yesterday. The motion which he alluded to on that occasion was that made by his noble and learned Friend on the state of the trade of the country in 1817, on which the noble and learned Lord made

a most able and eloquent speech on the distressed state of the country. There were many features in the circumstances of that time corresponding with the present state of the country. The noble Lord, after depicting the unparalleled intensity of the distress which prevailed at the period alluded to, and after going into a detail of the remedies which, in his opinion, ought to be applied, said that this naturally brought him to the question of the Corn-law :—

"I must say," said the noble Lord, "a single word on the Corn Bill, which, strictly speaking, comes within the class of measures I am alluding to. To the opinion which I originally entertained upon that law, I still adhere. I feel now as I did then, that its first effects are injurious by cutting off a great article of foreign trade; but I look for an ample compensation for that injury in advantages of a higher nature—the insuring a regular, safe, and ultimately cheap, supply of the great necessary of life, which no change of foreign policy, no caprice of hostile Governments can impede or disturb."

His noble and learned Friend, could not but admit that these expressions warranted him in affirming that the noble Lord's sentiments at that time were as diametrically opposite to those entertained by the noble and learned Lord at the present time, as could possibly be. He did not mean to reproach the noble Lord because he had changed his opinions; on the contrary, he held that in all the great questions affecting the commerce of this great country, it was more consonant with wisdom to watch the results of experience than dogmatically to persist in preconceived opinions. He therefore made it no subject of reproach to the noble Lord, that he did not in 1841 entertain his opinion of 1817. The advice he wished to give the noble Lord was, not to throw stones at his windows, or make that a reproach to him which would apply with at least equal justice to the noble and learned Lord himself.

Lord Brougham begged to assure the noble Lord that he took his observations in very good part, but he must say, that he felt rather disappointed at finding that the noble Lord had made out so inconsiderable a discrepancy between the opinions which he had expressed twenty-six years ago, and those which he held at the present period upon the subject of the Corn-laws. First, the misrepresentation on the former evening, of what he had said upon this subject, led him to expect something of a more important and serious nature than what the

noble Lord had this evening charged him with. In the first place, in order that he might set himself right upon this point, he must remind the noble Lord that on the former evening when he referred to what his opinions were twenty-six years ago, he naturally recollected that that was the period at which the great debate was taken upon the Corn-law, and he as naturally thought that the noble Lord had referred to something the noble Lord supposed he had said, upon the debate upon the Corn-law Bill. In answer to which he said, that such a circumstance was impossible, for he had not then been a Member of the House. Now, with respect to the opinions which the noble Lord had stated, were expressed by him in 1817 upon this point, he believed that such opinions were then entertained by him, and that the quotation which the noble Lord had read to the House was perfectly correct. The noble Lord, however, was candid enough to state that such a change of opinion could never be reasonably brought as a charge against any man, particularly when it was considered that it was after a period of twenty-four years' experience and reflection upon the subject that he had thought proper to change or modify his opinions; but the noble Lord had not said enough upon this subject; his candour should have led him to another observation with reference to the great changes which had taken place in the interim, and the many alterations which had since been effected in the country, to change the whole aspect of affairs, and to warrant a different opinion upon the subject. The quotation which the noble Lord had read to the House, was part of a speech which was made by him the very year after the original Corn-law Bill of 1815 had passed into a law. Was it then at all inconsistent for him at such a time to have said, "Now that you have given protection to the corn trade let it continue; don't seek to disturb it; let us have proper experience of its results; I don't consider that a repeal of such a bill would prove a remedy for the existing distress which prevails throughout the country?" Was there any inconsistency in saying, after a period of twenty-six years from that time, when he had so ample a time to see how it worked, and when he had the fullest experience of its fatal effects upon the interests of the country, "I have duly considered this question, and I have arrived at this conclusion, that the protection upon corn was no longer required, and its gradual abolition was of the most essential impor-

tance to the interests of this country." But he begged to remind the noble Lord, that many other circumstances had arisen to warrant him in this change of opinion with which he had been charged. He would ask the noble Lord, were the landowners of this country, in the same position now as they were in 1817? He would ask the noble Lord, was the country in the same position now, in respect to the landowners, as they were in 1817? He thought that if the noble Lord, would but take the trouble to read a few more of the observations which he had made nearly at the same time, the noble Lord would, he would almost venture to say, find, that one of the many grounds upon which he had rested the opinions which he had held in 1817, which he subsequently held fourteen years ago, and which he had expressed at that time, upon the introduction of Mr. Canning's Corn-law Bill,—the noble Lord, he repeated, would find that one of the many grounds upon which he had stated his opinions then upon the question, was the peculiar burdens under which the landed interests of the country then lay. And what were these? The then state of the Poor-law, and the heavy burdens which then pressed upon the land for the maintenance of the poor, and on the land exclusively. Now he would ask the noble Lord, had no change taken place since that period upon this subject? He would ask, was not the burden upon the land greatly mitigated since that time. He was unwilling to enter at any length upon this subject, or to discuss any one of its branches. He was unwilling to say anything with reference to what he would call that most wise and necessary measure of the Government until, he had further experience of its results. He could not, however, avoid alluding to the reports which had gone abroad concerning it, which reports were of the most false and erroneous character, and which were not only seized with the most malignant avidity, but circulated with an industry only matched by the greatness and grossness of the misrepresentation itself. The reports to which he had alluded were those which had represented this bill as the landlords' bill, and that it was adopted by Parliament because it was a measure that was solely intended to benefit the landlords. Now, so far from these reports having the slightest particle of truth in them, he would say, that the Poor-law Bill was introduced for the great object of improving the character and circumstances of the labouring

people of this country. That was the main principle and the grand object of the measure, and it was also considered to be a bill from which great and important benefits would arise to the other classes of the community. When he had made the speech to which the noble Lord had alluded, the Poor-law was very different in its workings to what it now was. It was, at the former period, actually eating into the substance and ownership of the land of this country, and while, on the one hand, the character and the comforts of the poor suffered severely by the maladministration of the law; on the other, the landed interest was falling before the numerous abuses with which it was accompanied. He never was so peremptory as to deny altogether protection to the landed interest. He would ask, was it no protection to the landed interest to say, that ample notice should be given of their intention to repeal the Corn-laws? Was it no protection to the landed interest to say, that the duties should not be suddenly abolished, but that they should go gradually towards abolishing those duties? Was it no protection to say, that the duties should be reduced by a gradual percentage, year after year, until they were altogether abolished? [A Noble Lord: There ought to be no such reduction.] Then, perhaps, the noble Lord opposite would advocate the repeal of all duties at once. He could not say, that he had much hope of reaping the benefit of the noble Lord's support in his (Lord Brougham's) proposition, but he believed, that he would have in his favour the opinions of nine-tenths of the people of this country. He must say, that he thought his noble Friend (Lord Ashburton) had exaggerated the statement he (Lord Brougham) had made on Tuesday evening last, and he was astonished at the soreness with which his noble Friend appeared to feel his allusion to the noble Lord's preference to a shifting measure to one of a fixed nature. It would be enough for him to have felt annoyed at the allusion, if the noble Lord had changed his opinions from interested motives. Such not being the case, the noble Lord should not have felt so sore on his single casual remark, which he had made merely in the shape of a parenthesis. With regard to the other part of the noble Lord's observations, he should wish to know whether the noble Lord had intended to entangle him (Lord Brougham) in a discussion upon all the topics which were contained within the budget?

He would not, however, be drawn into any such discussion, further than to say, that he regretted greatly being obliged to differ from some of those gentlemen, with whom he had a long time acted, and whose great knowledge of the subject, and intimate acquaintance with its details, could only be exceeded by their pure and honourable and conscientious devotion to the cause. He alluded to the question which was connected with slavery. The noble Lord had thought proper to blame him for suffering such a length of time to elapse since his return to this country before he gave any opinion upon this subject. As he had before stated, he regretted to be obliged to differ in opinion upon this subject with those for whose opinions he had always entertained the highest respect. He particularly referred to his right hon. Friend, who was a Member of the other House (Dr. Lushington). He must say he could not go the length of declaring, that they were to treat the emancipated negroes of the West Indies, differently from any other class, to the effect of giving them more protection than others. He could not agree to this proposition, even for the sake of assisting in the working out of the great experiment of negro emancipation; which measure he had no hesitation in saying, was no longer an experiment, but an event which was perfectly consummated and successful. He would repeat, that even for the sake of working out this experiment, he could not consent to make, in their favour, any exception to the general and sound policy of the country. There ought to be no fixed rule against using sugar or any other article the produce of slave-labour. In fact, we already acted on this principle with regard to cotton and other commodities; why then, should the exclusive principle apply to sugar only? He should be sorry if such an admission should have the effect of encouraging slavery, or of retarding the emancipation of foreign slaves, but nevertheless, it would not be consistent with our own policy, nor, indeed, with wise statesmanship, to exclude foreign sugar for this reason. But slavery in foreign colonies, and the slave-trade carried on by foreign colonies, were very different things. And whenever we entered into a free-trade intercourse with any country, we ought to take care, that not a hogshead of sugar, not a bale of merchandize, should enter our markets which had been raised in a colony or country, that allowed the detestable,

execrable African slave trade to be still carried on; for it was well known, that not one hogshead of sugar could be imported from Brasil or Cuba, without also encouraging the Brazilian and Spanish African slave-trade. Of this he had no doubt whatever. It might be said, then, if you let in Guadeloupe, or Guiana, or East India sugar, you must let in slave sugar also, which will be imported through these entrepôts. To this his answer was, if you thought so, then you were bound to examine and provide for, so as to prevent such circumstances, before you open that trade; and you have no right to import sugar from Brasil or Cuba so long as you think that by doing so you may encourage the Spanish and Portuguese slave trade.

The Earl of *Winchelsea* begged to correct some mistakes into which the noble and learned Lord had fallen respecting the New Poor-law. The fact was, the measure had raised the rates in many parts of England; or if there had been a reduction in the poor rates it was thrown on the highway rates, which now bore the support of many men that would, under the old system, be supported by the Poor-law. Now, had the bill succeeded in raising the moral character of the labourers as the noble and learned Lord had predicted? The assistant Poor-law commissioners did not trouble themselves about this; their only care seemed to be to reduce the rates, and not to promote the improvement of the poor. That, at least, was his decided opinion, though he had supported the bill, and though he still believed it would be of great benefit, yet he should rejoice when the day came, on which the Poor-law commissioners would be removed from their authority, and when the bill would be carried out by those whom local and personal knowledge of the condition of the poor must have better qualified for that duty than persons who had no such experience. He, therefore, should certainly support any amendment that might come from the other House, to the effect that when two-thirds of a board of Guardians should agree upon the propriety of giving out-door relief, then that out-door relief might be given by the board; and he had no apprehension that in doing so they would be too lavish of the public money; but, on the contrary, he thought the boards would act with discretion and frugality. This he could say, from having attended meetings of boards where he had never seen a disposition to be lavish.

When lavish expenditure took place under the old law, it was not through kindness or false humanity, but because the guardians were under the influence of fear and intimidation. Under the present system such things would be impossible, as one man would be a check upon another. He should also support any amendment coming from the other House for the purpose of limiting the duration of the assistant-commissioners or of the commissioners-in-chief.

Lord *Portman* said, that the price of corn must be taken into consideration in discussing the operation of the New Poor-law. In 1837 one more pauper had received out-door relief than had been relieved in 1840, and in the year 1840 the relief of these paupers cost 560*l.* more than it had cost in 1837, and it was rather curious that the difference in the cost of the relief was precisely the difference between the price of bread in 1837 and 1840. He was certain that if the check of the Poor-law commission were removed from the west of England, it would operate injuriously to the poor. When the guardians could get rid of a poor man by eking out his wages, they would soon get back to the old system. But he agreed with the noble Earl in longing for the time when they should be able to do without the assistant-commissioners; for he must confess that their services could be very fairly dispensed with. He thought they did injury, by acting on their own various theories, instead of on one uniform principle. He should, however, be content to continue the system one year longer as it was, rather than recur to the old system. He had seen its practical good effect, and where one man, having gone into the workhouse rather than receive insufficient wages, had had his wages raised immediately.

The Earl of *Winchilea* referred to the cases of several worthy people who had never required a farthing from their parishes until after the passing of the New Poor-law, when, being overtaken by old age, they were compelled to solicit out-door relief, instead of getting which they were offered the workhouse. There were also a number of men in the district with which he was connected, who, when prevented from working by the winter, were, on asking for relief, also told, that they must come into the workhouse. Now he must think that the rigour of the new Poor-law could never have been intended to act upon such people as these. He thought the reason why greater numbers had not been compelled to solicit admission into workhouses,

was, not the moral operation of the new Poor-law, but the enormous outlay that had taken place in various parts of the country in consequence of the railways. But these works would soon cease, and then great quantities of labouring men would have to fall back on their parishes; indeed, he thought, that in some parts of England, there would always be a surplus population; for this reason, he had always been a friend to emigration and colonisation, and he hoped the legislature would soon take up this subject in a proper manner.

Lord *Portman* assured the noble Earl that in the district already alluded to they did that which the noble Earl desired—namely, they extended out-door relief to labourers who could not get employment. They sent up the cases of those whom they thought deserving out-door relief to the Poor-law commissioners, who then authorised the giving of it.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* said, let them not, for God's sake, send away the sinews of the English peasantry and banish them. There were abundant sources of labour in this country, without sending our population to cultivate the wilds of America, or to follow the mad project of robbing the natives of New Zealand of their lands. He had always looked on the New Poor-law as solely intended to raise the moral character of the poor. He thought it had fulfilled that intention; for the best manner of raising the moral condition of the poor, was to enable them to earn large and sufficient wages; and he was confident that no scheme could have been better devised for such an object than to say, that in no case should an able-bodied man receive any assistance to his wages. He protested against an able-bodied labourer in any case receiving assistance to his wages. The moment that system was brought into operation, from that moment the poor would again be ground down, and their subsistence calculated on any scale but that of comfort, which before the establishment of the New Poor-law Bill was the case in many agricultural districts. He was anxious to see the assistant-commissioners abolished. Whenever hardship took place, he was sure it was not owing to the authorities at Somerset-house; but to the assistant-commissioners, who each held their different theories, and became in some degree partisans in the districts where they were placed. If the assistant-commissioners were done away with, they would be less frequently misled by misrepresentation, and

they would have then a clearly defined responsible body.

Earl *Stanhope* said, in the elaborate speech made by the noble and learned Lord (Lord Brougham) in support of the New Poor-law, some years since, the noble Lord said, if the bill were not passed, the rental of the whole of the estates, of the country would be swallowed up in the rates. Indeed the noble and learned Lord said, if the measure were not passed, it was not improbable that he might become a Westmoreland pauper. But what had been the result of the measure? He contended, that instead of a reduction there had been an enormous increase in the amount of poor's rate. He had received information from the great town of Bradford. He could not go through a long calculation upon the amount of poor-rates levied in the town of Bradford, but they had increased full fifty per cent. upon what they had been under the former system; and in other places they had increased to a still greater amount. The noble Earl (Earl Fitzwilliam) seemed to deny this fact. This, however, was admitted by the noble and learned Lord, (Lord Brougham), that whilst there had been in some places a decrease, there had been in others an increase, and that there was a considerable increase in the year 1840 above that of 1839. He rejoiced that this had been the result; for the sordid and selfish feeling which prevailed in this country, where the only deity that was worshipped was mammon, and where so little regard was entertained for the wants of the labouring classes—he rejoiced that this impression had been made at last upon the pockets of the middling classes, who had been so base as to carry out this most execrable law. If any real reduction had taken place in the amount of poor-rates, in the aggregate, let not his noble and learned Friend flatter himself with the belief that it had been effected by measuring and weighing out the scanty allowances of the poor-house, but let him reflect that it had been done by abridging the comforts of the poor. He rejoiced to know that in a short time an appeal must be made to the country, which appeal he was convinced would be responded to, and would express the sentiments of the people in a manner not to be misunderstood—in which there could be (according to a memorable expression) no mistake—in a manner, sooner or later, and at no distant period, which would compel Parliament to do justice to the people, and thus prevent

that revolution which was approaching at a rapid rate. With reference to the proposed measure of a protection of 8s. the quarter on corn, that was, he must say, only a stepping-stone to the complete abrogation of the existing Corn-law. Talk of protection, it was nugatory. If the anti-Corn-law agitators meant anything, they went to a complete repeal of the Corn-law. He wished that there should be no delusion in the country on the subject. Let there be a free-trade in all things; and then he knew what would be the opinions of the labouring classes. What gratitude would they feel for those who now determined to press on all other branches of industry, and exterminate for the benefit of foreigners the industry of our native land. Let the people know that it was intended to lower wages, and even to deprive the labourer of employment. Those who advocated the repeal of the Corn-law might be able to procure the articles which they required from abroad; but he had every confidence in the good sense of the people of this country, and most of all in that of the labouring classes, who unfortunately, were not represented. But if they were to be assailed by the doctrines of free-trade, and if there were no other protection against that which must bring ruin and destruction upon the country, he would ask most emphatically, whether universal suffrage would not be better? For his own part, he would rather be governed by the Chartists than by the present Government. He was not a partisan of the Chartists; he had always endeavoured to restrain their mode of proceedings, and their feelings; but the Chartists were at least consistent with themselves,—they did on different occasions promulgate different opinions; their principles were consistent with each other; and though he knew that mighty evils would result from their sway, yet he knew at the same time, that the labourer would maintain his rights, which were now trampled under foot, capital only being heeded.

Lord Brougham begged to explain. He had stated that one of the main objects of the Poor-law Bill was to provide for the comforts and to raise the condition of the labouring classes; but he also stated that it would confer great benefit on the owners and cultivators of land, and prevent the ruin to the agricultural interest that was approaching. He might be permitted to add, that he had always deemed, and had always stated, and he believed that on one occasion he had read a quotation from Sir

Joseph Child in support of his opinion, that the prosperity of trade and the progress of agriculture were intimately connected.

The Earl of Wicklow said, that the whole of this irregular debate had arisen out of explanations entered into by the noble and learned Lord in reference to quotations made from his speeches by his noble Friend (Lord Ashburton); and the noble Lord had not attempted to refute this part of the subject, but the noble and learned Lord gave reasons for having changed his opinions.

The Earl of Stradbroke bore testimony to the beneficial operation of the Poor-law, and he gave his best thanks to those who sat in both Houses of Parliament who had been instrumental in carrying it out. He thought that the noble Earl (Stanhope) had adopted an unfair line of argument in referring to the case of the great town of Bradford, because that was purely and essentially a manufacturing town, where masses of the labouring classes were subject to the fluctuations which attended manufacturing populations, caused amongst many other things by improvements in machinery. In the year 1817 the poor-rates were more moderate, but from that period up to the year 1884, they increased to an enormous extent; and had the old law continued in force, the landed interest of this country must have passed away, by the operation of the Poor-rates.

Earl Fitzwilliam said, that, in reference to the increase of the Poor-rates at Bradford, the noble Earl opposite (Earl Stanhope) seemed to think that the evil had been occasioned by the New Poor-law, whereas it had arisen from the great and growing distress to which he had so often, but in vain, endeavoured to draw the attention of their Lordships. Extreme distress prevailed in that part of the country, a fact which the noble Earl said he rejoiced in, as affording evidence against the Poor-law. [Earl Stanhope: No, no.] If not, then the noble Earl rejoiced at it in another way—namely, as affording a proof that the middling classes would be punished for their base worship of the only deity they worshipped, the deity of mammon. His opinion was, that the Poor-law commissioners were necessary,—he did not mean to say, that their powers should be increased; but he thought they would never be able to administer the Poor-laws effectually unless they had a permanent office established for the superintendence of the working of the act. He did not say whether it should

be of the same kind as that which had been created for the purpose at Somerset-house. But if they did not choose to confer the power on the Home Secretary, they must have a permanent office or officer to superintend the working of the act, and for the purpose of taking away the power of making too great a deviation in the mode of the administration of the act in different parts of the country, because, as the noble Earl (Earl Winchilsea) had suggested, the administration could not be the same in the counties of Kent and Lincoln.

Earl Stanhope had quoted Bradford, but that was not a solitary case of the increase of the poor-rates. The same had been the case in other places wholly unconnected with manufactures. He rejoiced at the circumstance that the middling classes, who had been the agents and instruments in executing this most execrable law, would at last be induced, if not by considerations of justice and humanity, at least from regard to selfish interests, to yield to the overwhelming opposition which was now raised to this law.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, June 10, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Bribery at Elections; Militia Pay; Appropriation.—Read a second time:—County Bridges (No. 2); Highway Rates.—Read a third time:—New South Wales; Western Australia; Houses of Industry (Ireland); Dog Carts.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Villiers, Mr. Brotherton, Viscount Morpeth, Sir J. O. Hobhouse, Mr. Warburton, and others, from Bilston, Wolverhampton, Stanbridge, Surrey, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. G. Parker, (Mr. J. Round, Sergeant Jackson, and other hon. Members, from Essex, Waterford, Tipperary, and other places, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Sir J. Graham, from Milford, for Inquiry into the fitness of that place for a Steam Packet Station.—By Sir G. Sinclair, from various places in Scotland, against the Grant to Maynooth, against Mails on Railways on Sundays, and against Commercial Changes.—By Mr. Evans, from Derbyshire, praying for a Revision of the Import Duties.

REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS — HERTFORD.] Mr. T. Duncombe moved the Order of the Day for calling in the clerk of the peace for the county of Hertford to the bar.

Mr. Story, the clerk of the peace for the county of Hertford, then appeared at the bar, with a large book in his hand.

The Speaker said, you are ordered to attend this day with a copy of the register of the electors of the county of Hertford. Is that a copy in your hand?

Mr. Story: It is.



The *Speaker*: Please to deliver it in. You may withdraw.

Mr. Story delivered in the copy and withdrew.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* said, he should like to have that copy of the register printed. He did not know that the House would consent to it, but he had a right to ask the question. He would take the opportunity of observing, he did not think they had dealt with the clerk of the peace too harshly on this occasion. He thought it right to state, that after the order of the House, he had referred to several of the principal law-stationers in London, to know in what time they could furnish a copy of the Finsbury list of electors, containing 13,000 names, and was informed by Messrs. Fry law-stationers of Gray's Inn, that it could be copied in two or three hours, in which time they would engage to get it done. Therefore, he thought, they had not been too hard upon the clerk of the peace, in ordering him to produce a copy this day. He should be content whether this question was referred to the printing committee, or that the House should decide whether the copy should be printed or not. The House would remember, that the copy was ordered to be laid on the Table to redress the grievances of the electors of Hertford, but there were no means of redressing those grievances, except the register was printed. It was the duty of the House to protect the elective franchise, and he thought the exercise of that franchise had been impeded by the delay of the clerk of the peace to furnish a copy of the register. He could see no use in the copy lying on the Table. Moreover, his motion was not unprecedented. In 1834, the hon. Member for Dublin had moved that the register of Carrickfergus be printed, and it was printed by order of the House. He, therefore, moved, that this copy of the register be printed.

Sir *R. Inglis* thought, the question which was put to the clerk of the peace referred to the time in which he himself, with the assistance of his clerks, could make a copy of the register. Any professional person must be aware, that by cutting the register, to pieces, it could be accomplished in three hours. With respect to the motion before the House, he believed, that if the register were printed, not more than ten copies would be sold, and if the hon. Gentleman pressed his motion to a division, he (Sir *R. Inglis*) would certainly vote against it.

Mr. *Hume* said, he thought the difficulties which had been thrown in the way of obtaining the register were highly culpable. He never saw a practised lawyer give evidence in so discreditable a manner. Now that the register was obtained, means must be adopted for placing it in the hands of the electors. It appeared to him to be absolutely necessary, that the register should be printed. The hon. Member had proposed, that it should be printed at the expense of the House, and doubtless there were one or two examples of that course. As chairman of the committee with respect to the printing of local papers, he thought a document of this nature should be allowed to be printed at the expense of the parties. He held in his hand the list of the electors of Lincoln, which had been laid on the Table of the House upon motion, which had been printed at the expense of the parties; and he had also a statement of the expense of that printing, from which it appeared, that the expense of printing a sufficient number of the returns for the electors of Hertford would be 146*l*. He thought if this document was to be printed, it ought to be done at the expense of the parties who asked for it. He hoped, therefore, that his hon. Friend would not press his motion to a division, because if he did, he could not support him. At the same time, he must say, that he thought there ought to be some remedy for the abuse.

Mr. *T. Duncombe* said, after what had been stated by hon. Members he would not press the motion.

Motion negatived.

Mr. *Hume* presumed, that the parties might print the document at their own expense.

Viscount *Howick* said, that he thought it would be unjust to the electors, that they should be called on to bear the expense of having a document of this kind printed, which ought to be done at the expense of the county. An act ought, in his opinion, to be passed without further delay, by which it should be obligatory on the clerk of the peace of every county to provide a register, at an expense of 2*s*. or 3*s*. for every person who might demand one; and that for every delay which the clerk of the peace might be guilty of in furnishing the required copy, a penalty of 5*l*. or 10*l*. should be imposed. That, he thought, would provide a remedy in such cases as the present.

Conversation dropped.

DANISH CLAIMS.] The Order of the Day for bringing up the report on the Danish claims was read; the report brought up, and resolution read a first time. On the question that it be read a second time.

The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* rose and said, that after the very able and eloquent speech of his learned Friend last night, he had certainly expected to have heard some arguments from the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite in favour of this motion. As, however, he had abstained from entering into the question, he should not go into all the different grounds which had been so well disposed of, but he would tell the House that it became their duty to think very seriously before they took the step of addressing her Majesty. After the question had been so fully discussed, the House would allow him to suggest, that in point of form, the address to which they had agreed was bad—in fact, that the House was about to ask her Majesty to do that which she cannot do. The address requests her Majesty to advance a quarter of a million, and they engaged the honour of the House to make it good at a future period. Now he would ask any Gentleman in the House, how her Majesty could legally comply with that request. There was no legal power in the Crown to do so, and the only answer that could be made to such an address was, that the Crown had no power to comply with such a request. If the House would listen to him for a few moments, he would satisfy them that the Crown had no power to advance any such sum of money out of any funds whatever. No doubt precedents could be shown for such a course—no doubt that a time when the Crown had hereditary revenues and large sums at its disposal, it was in the power of the Crown to make advances on the faith of the advance being repaid by that House. But they had curtailed those revenues, and most properly he thought, with the concurrence of the Crown; they gradually reduced those funds at the disposal of the Crown until there remained nothing but the Civil list which was necessary for its own expenditure, and a small sum of the civil contingencies which had been granted for only six months. Now, that being all that was at the disposal of the Crown, he would ask the hon. and learned Member, or even the hon. Member for Kilkenny, how it could be expected that the Crown could make such an advance? He was bound to tell the House, that if a treasury

warrant, signed by her Majesty, and countersigned by himself, were issued, and he were to take it to the Exchequer, the answer would be, that there was no legal means by which it could be paid, that her Majesty had no power to issue such a warrant, that they could not pay any sum of money unless they were directed to do so by a bill passed by that House, and concurred in by the rest of the Legislature. Now, without going further into details, he would call upon the House to take care that they did not ask her Majesty to take a step which was against the law. The House had always been most properly jealous on the matter—the House had always looked carefully, so as not to allow either the Executive or the Crown to put its hands in the public purse without regulations and restrictions; and he would defy the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite to tell him out of what funds the Crown could advance the money. It was true, that with regard to sums of small amount, the Crown might advance them out of its hereditary-revenues, or out of the civil contingencies. There was the case of Mr. Palmer. The hon. and learned Gentleman did not appear to understand the peculiar distinction there was in the case. Mr. Palmer had a claim against the Post Office, and the House had addressed the Crown praying it to pay the sum claimed to Mr. Palmer. But what were the circumstances of the case? A contract had been entered into, as had been alleged, between the Government and Mr. Palmer, relating to the collection of the Post-Office revenue. But in that case there was a specific provision in an Act of Parliament authorising the Crown to pay the expenses attendant on the collection of the Post-Office revenue out of the revenue itself; yet, although there was a specific Act of Parliament authorising the payment, at the time the application was thought so irregular, that the answer of the Crown was, that when the means were provided, the money should be paid. Such was the answer given to the address of the House, although legally the Crown had the power to pay the money. That was the course which had been pursued in that case, in which there were means of payment; but here there were not any means whatever provided by which the request could be complied with, and he trusted, that the House in its anxiety to remedy a supposed injustice to certain parties, would not place the Crown and itself in the position of

asking her Majesty to perform an act which by law she had no power to do. He thought it more fair to bring forward this objection, which had struck him since yesterday, at once, and he should be glad to hear what answer the hon. Member for Kilkenny, or the hon. and learned Gentleman could make to it.

Mr. *Hume* said, it was true that her Majesty had no money but what this House afforded to her. The object of this motion was to enforce what the House had more than once acknowledged to be an act of justice, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman why they voted against the Government, and carried their vote for granting the first class of Danish claims? It was true that the House, against the wishes and efforts of the Government, voted, that the first class of the claims should be paid. The same course was pursued with regard to the second class of claimants, and the only difference between those two Governments and the present was, that those two Governments acted in obedience to the orders of the House of Commons, and put those claims in the estimates, and why did not the right hon. Gentleman do the same? There were various ways in which that could be done. Take the case which happened a few months ago. He objected to an address to her Majesty, praying that she would take means to settle 2,000*l.* a-year on Lord Keane. He divided against the motion, but he was in a minority—the House of Commons decided against him. Was this objection taken then? If the objection is a proper one, the case of Lord Keane was open to precisely the same objection. What he understood by that vote was, that it simply asked her Majesty, if she approved of the object of the vote, that she would give directions to her Ministers to bring in a bill for the purpose of carrying that vote into effect. That was done in the case of Lord Keane, and why was not the same course pursued in the present instance? Was there any difficulty whatever in adopting the same course, or did the right hon. Gentleman say, that whatever the House of Commons might determine, Ministers would not adopt it? The late Chancellor of the Exchequer said the same, but still he adopted it. Money had been paid on the same ground, and it therefore appeared to him, that the objection was utterly unworthy of her Majesty's Government, when, on two previous occasions, they had paid similar claims. The first class of claimants was

immediately paid, and the second class was paid also, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that he would never consent to it. The question was, whether her Majesty's Ministers, after the expression of opinion by the House, five times repeated, were determined to prevent its being carried into effect. If so, the only course that remained was, for the hon. Gentleman to ask leave to bring in a bill to carry out the intentions of the House, and pay the money. He submitted to her Majesty's Government, that having acted in two cases in obedience to the address of the House, they ought to do so on the present occasion, and not to counsel her Majesty to refuse her consent when the House had come to the resolution by a majority of 540 against perhaps 5. He submitted to them that was not a becoming course to adopt towards a majority of the House of Commons. The Government had admitted, that a majority of one was sufficient to test the wish of the House; why, then, should they advise her Majesty not to accede to that which, in the course of justice, this House had thought proper to recommend. He was not aware of any other mode, if Ministers refused, than bringing in an Act of Parliament, and compelling them to adopt the course the House desired to be pursued by that Act. He would state an instance of a parallel case. A claim was made on the East-India Company—the Company declared that the claim was good, but it was not satisfied. Leave was then asked to bring in a bill. That bill was brought in, and a sum of 22,000*l.* was paid, not of public monies, but of the money of the East-India Company, to the individual, in satisfaction for his claim for justice. Various other instances had come to his knowledge, and might be stated. He, therefore, submitted to the Government, that after repeated indications of the opinions of large majorities of this House, they should not be stopped by technicalities from carrying those opinions into effect.

Mr. *Cresswell* said, the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, complains of me for not answering the right hon. the Solicitor-general, when this resolution was first proposed. I should certainly have done so, particularly after the good-humoured piece of mischief which the right hon. Gentleman directed against me, but I thought it would be more consonant with the form of the House, as the motion was put from the Chair, that some one should oppose it before I said anything

in its favour. Now, with respect to the objections stated to-day by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that I call upon the House to adopt an address to the Crown, asking her Majesty to do that which by law she has no power to do. I frankly state, that I am driven to this course by the persevering opposition of himself and his predecessor to the wish of the House. Therefore, I thought I was justified—nay, Sir, I think I was bound in justice to those on whose behalf I have undertaken this question, thinking them justly entitled to the compensation which they ask. I considered, that I was bound to bring it before this House in every shape which the form of the House made legitimate for the purpose of following out that successful motion which I made four years ago, in behalf of these unfortunate sufferers. And I cannot help thinking, that the right hon. Gentleman has not been quite correct in his solution of the case of Mr. Palmer. He was well aware, I should rely upon Mr. Palmer's case as a precedent. Undoubtedly, before I troubled the House, I was bound to look for some precedent, and I found one in the case of Mr. Palmer; in that case, I found an address to the Prince Regent, praying his Royal Highness to direct certain sums to be paid which the House pledged itself to make good. The right hon. Gentleman says, that that is no precedent, because the Prince Regent had the power by act of Parliament—that funds were already at his disposal by act of Parliament, and he was authorized to pay the money out of the Post-office revenue. If so, how came his Royal Highness's advisers to bring back this answer—that they would order the money to be paid when funds existed? I think Mr. Palmer's case does present a precedent for this, but whether it does or not, I shall certainly persevere in my motion, and divide the House, in order that I may have a declaration on the part of this House, whether they do or do not coincide in the propriety of making compensation. And now I will endeavour to meet the arguments of my hon. and learned Friend, the Solicitor-general, and if I had heard them for the first time last night—if that had been the first occasion of this matter being brought before the House, when my hon. and learned Friend got up and told me, that he thought I was under some misapprehension, that I had misconceived the facts in reference to this subject, and had drawn false conclusions from the premises that I had advanced, I

should have been very apt to suppose, that I was in some error, if the matter had not been fully discussed on three several occasions. In listening to my hon. Friend afterwards, I found, that he had been extremely diligent in reading what had passed on former occasions, and put all the scattered fragments of argument into a connected form last night; yet, in truth, he had recounted nothing new; not one single argument, nothing, in fact, was added, except one or two dates, and, as I think, the hon. Member for Bridport laid some stress upon those dates, I beg his attention to one or two, which were not mentioned by the Solicitor-general. On the 27th July, as stated by my hon. and learned Friend, the expedition sailed. At that time, an embargo had been laid upon all Danish vessels. Danish vessels were afterwards seized and brought in. The hon. and learned Gentleman has stated, that on the 16th of August, a proclamation was issued by the Danish government, stating, that they considered hostilities had then commenced. Now, I beg to draw the attention of the House to a proclamation which was issued by the commander of the British forces before Copenhagen; and let us see what was stated by the commander of our own forces as to there being war or not, because the whole case had been rested by my hon. and learned Friend, upon the fact of these ships and vessels being seized. What was the proclamation issued by the commander of the British forces on August 16, the very date given by the hon. and learned Gentleman, the Solicitor-general? I think they then said, that they came to the Danish shores not as enemies—"We come to your shores, inhabitants of Zealand, not as enemies, but in self-defence, to prevent those who have so long destroyed the peace of Europe—to prevent you from turning the course of your navy against us." The hon. and learned Gentleman had said, that if a weak man, having a deadly weapon in his hand, met with a strong man, and upon his attacking him, and his using that weapon, it was wrested from him, was it to be said, that he was to be entitled to compensation? I should say, yes. What right, I would ask, have we to take Danish vessels without giving compensation to them? I have shown, that the commanders of the British vessels had disclaimed being at war in August, 1807; what was said? Why, that because of the acts against the Danish property the British nation were bound to compensate them. So justly was that felt

by the British Government, that in September it was thought necessary to issue a State Paper, in order to justify the proceedings of the Government. So the matter rested; but before that, what took place on the 7th of September? The hon. and learned Gentleman said, these parties were very incautious after these proceedings in sailing up the Baltic; but on the 7th of September, when the stipulation of Copenhagen was sanctioned, it was stipulated, that all hostile acts should cease, and that nothing like war took place till November. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said this doctrine was new in the House—that heretofore it had been conceded, that there was war at that time. Now, for my own part, I may say, that I have never conceded any such thing, for on the very first occasion on which I brought this question before the House, I said, that there was no war. In war, we might give other nations the opportunity of making reprisals, but those things became debts of the State, and ought to be paid by it. But when it was a case of State necessity it became much more important. My hon. and learned Friend has quoted the opinion of Sir James Mackintosh, an opinion always entitled to great respect, which was given in this House, that the parties who had goods or debts that were confiscated were entitled to compensation on this principle, that if the subjects of this country were injured in a foreign state, by seizure of their property, if the Government did not obtain redress, the Government were bound to make compensation. Now, Sir, that may be very true, but I do not find, that principle was ever enunciated in this House till it was used by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when that office was filled by Lord Monteagle. It was a very convenient argument, indeed, for a Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the principle was first made use of by Lord Monteagle, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in 1834. It is a principle which was never held by Lord Althorp; nor was it ever mentioned till introduced in debate to answer the claims with respect to the seizure of goods and ships, which was brought before this House. When an hon. Gentleman, the guardian of the public purse, gets up and says, that this act was done during the war, I say, grant that we were at war, still we are entitled to have our claims attended to, and if there was no war we are also entitled to be protected against such a seizure. I say,

the principle was never acknowledged by the Government, until it suited the purposes of Government, in order to defeat the claims advanced. But we have several instances which were treated of by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, when an application was made with respect to the state of affairs in the Baltic after the attack on Copenhagen. The hon. and learned Gentleman (the Solicitor-general) said, that those applications were made to the Admiral, who is dead, and, therefore, that no information could be obtained on the matter. But one of those applications referred to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, the Member for the Tower Hamlets, was made to the Admiralty, and not to the Admiral. I believe, that the insurances were made, in order, that the dock-yards might be supplied with the produce of the countries bordering on the Baltic. The Government at the time encouraged seamen to go up the Baltic, in order to bring home goods. It was said, there was extreme imprudence in going up the Baltic, at the period alluded to. What imprudence could there be in so doing? Those who sailed there had information to the effect, that all hostilities had ceased—that they might go in perfect safety. The hon. and learned Gentleman, the Solicitor-general, asked me for my proofs. I have had recourse to two or three authorities on the subject, which I mentioned on a former occasion. I beg the hon. and learned Gentleman's attention to the third book of Grotius, *De Jure Belli*, and the second book of Vattel, chapter 18. I there find the following passage :—

“Those who have given occasion for reprisals, are bound to grant compensation to those who have suffered by them.”

(The hon. and learned Gentleman then quoted a passage from Grotius to the effect that “it was the duty of a State to compensate those on whom reprisals had fallen.”) I think, that those passages show, that as the seizure of the Danish property was in itself opposed to the laws of nations, the Danes being a friendly power, and they not having denied us any right, or done us any wrong, for which they had refused compensation, when we seized on their goods, I think, that under these circumstances, we are to take upon ourselves the responsibility of the consequences of the war. If, under these circumstances, compensation had been de-

manded from the Danes, they would say, that they had been attacked merely because they would not surrender their armaments, their capital was bombarded, and their citizens slaughtered, and they were not liable for the consequences of such a state of things. There is but one other topic to which I shall advert. The hon. and learned Gentleman, and the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, had said, that they were the trustees of the public purse. Yes, they were; but what had they done with the trust fund? When Lord Brougham was Lord Chancellor an expression fell from him which, in my opinion, did him great honour. A large sum of money had been in dispute between parties of the name of Troutbeck. The Attorney-general stated upon the occasion, that the money was gone, and that there was no use in entering into a discussion on the subject. "But," said Lord Brougham, "if the money is gone, it is not gone according to law. It ought to be here to abide the result of the suit; and I will not allow you to put that in argument," I, too, say, that when there was a trust fund, it should be used for the purpose of that trust. On the last occasion, when I had the honour of submitting the subject for the consideration of the House, I read to the House a letter placed in my hands, by my friend Mr. Wilberforce. On a former occasion, when a discussion had come on in the House respecting the detention of the Danish vessels, and the claims of our subjects, Mr. Wilberforce had voted with the Government, and in favour of the detention of the vessels. A remonstrance, however, had been addressed to him upon the subject, and he had then stated, that he had acted with great reluctance, but he could not resist the argument that those vessels would constitute a trust fund for the purpose of making compensation to those among our own subjects whose property might have been seized by the Danes. I say, therefore, that was a trust fund, and though it had become a trust fund some thirty years ago, and was not applied to the purpose to which it ought to be applied, that forms no argument against the claimants, and they have not by their neglect, or by a want of due notice, lost their title. I trust, then, the House will sanction the motion to which I have called its attention. Whether the House adopts or rejects this motion, I have done my duty. The House will make its decision upon its own responsibility, and it rests with it to

rescind or abide by the decision it has on so many occasions already come to.

Mr. Warburton did not regret, that the aid of the hon. and learned Solicitor-general had been called in, but it would not induce him to vary the vote he had given on a former occasion. He thought it had been established to the satisfaction of the House, that those were reprisals, and not captures, and that the parties were entitled to compensation. He need not refer to the case of the Spanish vessels which had been seized at the breaking up of the war in Spain, and in which compensation was granted to the owners. On the 22nd of July, an embargo was laid on all the Danish vessels in the English ports, and an armament was sent out to seize all vessels on the high seas belonging to that government. The armament ascended to the mouth of the Baltic, which everybody knew was a close sea, and he thought it only reasonable, fair, and just, that where the British Government derived so large a sum of money from the capture of the fleet and stores, and the condemnation of vessels seized in British ports, it was only reasonable and just that compensation should be afforded out of that large sum. It was nothing for him to hear that the funds had been misapplied; it was no answer to say, that thirty years had elapsed since the occurrence; that was only a stronger reason why the parties should immediately receive the small pittance of compensation to be awarded to them. He relied upon the want of notice to the British, who were sending their vessels to the Baltic, and upon the withdrawal of the British fleet, thereby rendering capture certain. That was enough to justify him in departing from the usual rules, in voting for compensation.

The *Solicitor-General* did not wish for a moment to take credit to himself for anything he was not entitled to, therefore he must disclaim the credit given him by his learned Friend, that his statements of last night were merely the arguments used in former debates, and put in a clearer form; he supposed the superior intelligence of his learned Friend had enabled him to find it out. Sir James Mackintosh had distinctly laid it down, that book debts and goods seized ought to be compensated because they were seized against the usages of war and the law of nations; in such a case, he laid it down that it was the duty of the Government to enforce compensation by arms, or to make com-

pensation out of their own funds. The application of the principle, however, he limited to seizures made against the law of nations, and against the usages of war. That was an authority upon the present occasion. When he addressed the House yesterday, he had refrained from reading the documents, contenting himself with stating them, and waiting until he heard whether they were contradicted. He would then read them. The first was a clear declaration of war upon the part of Denmark against England; and he said distinctly, that that declaration was made on the 16th of August. He would now state the facts; he would recapitulate them to the House. His hon. and learned Friend had stated, that there had been an embargo previous to the 27th of July. Now, he could discover no such thing, and he should be glad if his hon. and learned Friend, would refer him to the authority on which he made such statement. [Mr. Cresswell: It was so stated on bringing forward the motion in 1831.] He would refer his hon. and learned Friend to the orders of the Admiralty for laying on the embargo, which were dated the 25th of August. He had inquired at the Admiralty, and there was no document there to show, that any embargo had been laid on before the 25th of August; nor could he find at the Admiralty any trace of any application having been made there, as stated by one of the persons interested in supporting these claims, by any persons for information, or that any information had been given by any persons on the subject. On the 25th of August, the orders of the Admiralty authorising the detention of vessels were issued, and affairs continued in that state until the 2nd September, when those orders were confirmed and extended by an Order in Council. On the 3rd of August, the British fleet arrived off the coast of Denmark, and cut off all communication between the island of Zealand and the continent of Europe. Now, what effect on the mind of any man of ordinary intelligence must the appearance of a British fleet off the coast of Denmark have produced? If it were unexpected, the more likely was it to excite alarm; and he contended, that the appearance of that fleet, accompanied as it was by a great body of troops, was abundant intimation to the merchants, that they could not remain safely in the present

fleet, and that if they did so remain, they must do so at their own expense and risk, and not at the expense and risk of the nation. From the 6th of August until the 13th, negotiations were going on between Mr. Jackson, the representative of the British Government at Copenhagen, and the Danish Government, relative to the surrender of the Danish fleet to the care of Great Britain. On the 16th of August, the Danish government issued the following proclamation, which would be found in the 14th volume of the "*Annual Register*," page 173. (The hon. and learned Gentleman here read the declaration of Christian 6th, in which, after reciting the demands made by the British resident, Mr. Jackson, he stated, that the resident, on the refusal of the Danish Government, to comply with those demands, had demanded passports for himself and his suite, and that, consequently, the war between England and Denmark might be considered as actually broken out, and he called upon all his faithful subjects to arm to repel the English aggression. He further ordered, that all English ships and property wherever found should be seized, and that all English should, until they could be sent out of the country, be placed under arrest; and the declaration finished by stating, that, as a matter of course, all English ships and boats found upon the coast, should be considered as hostile and that all correspondence with English subjects should cease until further orders.) When the King of Denmark issued a proclamation on the 16th of August, that war was actually broken out, could any man say, that he was justified in remaining in the Baltic to prosecute commercial speculations, on the belief, that pacific relations would not be interrupted? No relations of peace and amity subsisted between the nations after that proclamation; and on that day Admiral Gambler and Lord Cathcart issued an address, in which they stated, that they were ordered there by command of his Majesty, to obtain by pacific negotiation, if possible, the surrender of the Danish fleet. That surrender was refused; and, on the 24th of August, the Danish government issued a further proclamation, in very hostile terms. On the 2nd September, the bombardment of Copenhagen commenced. From that time, there was no possibility of a statement that any cessation of hostilities had

taken place. On the 9th September, the decree was issued, which gave rise to the claims for compensation, namely, that respecting the confiscation. On the 23rd of September a British manifesto was issued, showing the two nations distinctly to be at war. Now, when were these vessels seized? On the 6th of August, and on the 6th of September: but the great majority late in October, through November, and down to the 23rd of December. On the 4th of November, Great Britain, never having entertained hostile feelings towards Denmark, but having acted on the principle of great State necessity—a necessity founded on the most absolute justice—if self-protection be consistent with justice—the Government of the day was restrained from presenting a perfect defence, because we know, that at certain times private information which the Government may procure, may not be disclosed with safety to the individual who furnished that information, nor consistently with the means of obtaining further information which it might be desirable that they should possess. But, afterwards they discovered, that France and Russia had determined to seize the Danish fleet, and use it hostilely against Great Britain; and when the British navy arrived at Copenhagen, that place was in a state absolutely defenceless, so as to give every facility to the objects of Russia and France. It was complained that the English had taken the fleet when the Danes were not in a situation for defence. But that was their justification, for it became the imperative duty of the Government of the day to take wise, prompt, and decisive measures, that that fleet should not be used for the invasion of Great Britain, and the British Government would have deserved impeachment if, on the information they possessed, they had not wrested from the power of Russia such powerful means as the Danish fleet afforded. The hon. and learned Gentleman denied that they were at war. His acute and intelligent Friend behind him (Mr. Warburton) had looked too closely into the question to make such an assertion; he had retired from that position. What constituted war? One nation appeared with a powerful armament on the shores of another nation, demanding of that other to surrender its fleet; that demand was resisted, and the Government so required, published to its subjects that the two na-

tions were at war, and immediately directed the commencement of hostile acts. Did not that constitute war? Were the Danes to say whether they were at war, or his hon. and learned Friend? In their proclamations they stated, that the war was begun. It was not a paper war; a proclamation was issued by the Danish Government, that the two nations were at war. What was the foundation for the statement that the two nations were not at war? There was not the slightest, unless his hon. Friend could erase from the records this declaration of war on the part of Denmark. It was a most material fact for the House to bear in mind, and to adopt a distinct conclusion upon, were the two nations at war, prior to the seizure of these vessels? His hon. Friend seemed to think that he had imputed to him a want of accuracy in reference to the books. He had read the speech of his hon. and learned Friend attentively, and after reading it, he was astonished at the result. Nothing but his happy manner of delivering what he had to say, could have made that speech effectual to convince the House. His hon. and learned Friend seemed to think, that he (the Solicitor-general) was mistaken in supposing, that he had drawn an incorrect inference. His hon. and learned Friend had not made any quotation from Grotius. He would refer the House to the authority of Vattel on the subject of reprisals. Reprisals were those things which were taken by nations which had a complaint against other countries, prior to the breaking out of a war, and with a view to obtain justice, upon a matter of complaint. (The hon. and learned Gentleman then referred to the authority of Vattel with respect to reprisals, in justification of the course the Government had pursued.) Now what was the date of the seizure of the vessels in question, what were the dates as compared with the declaration he had heard that the two nations were at war? A few in the month of August, still fewer in September, and fewer still in October and November. The two nations were at war after the 4th of November. Apologies were made for the act done, but stating that it was absolutely necessary for the preservation of the country by reason of the coalition of France and Russia. If his learned Friend called that an apology he was at perfect liberty to do so; but, in his (the Solicitor-general) opinion, it was justice to the nation. These



seizures, therefore, he said, were all of them after war, and there was no ground for calling into the subject any recognised principle, for the case of goods and debts stood upon different grounds. Now, he wished to understand the ground upon which this was put, was it enough to say, that it was the peculiar circumstances of the case; if such was to be the ground it might be said, and said truly, that every case had its peculiar circumstances; no two cases could be identical; if it was to be put on the ground of peculiarity of circumstances it should be put upon some great and intelligible ground, such as could not be mistaken on future occasions. Now, what was the peculiarity here? His friends said, that they were taken by surprise—that no notice had been given of hostility to enable them to escape—was that the peculiarity? How often would it happen—he hoped never to see such days as that, but if the experience of the past was matter of caution for the future, looking at the course of events what answer he would ask could they give to the numerous claims which stood upon the same foundation? He denied that they had not responsible notice, and even if they had not, if it was said that the absence of notice furnished a ground for compensation, then he said, that the present case was peculiar for absence of any such ground; but he asserted that the parties had as much notice as was necessary. It was stated in the course of the debate, that an individual of the name of Harrison, had applied to Admiral Gambier to know if he might safely go to the Baltic. This might be the case, but the supposed conversation took place thirty years after the period referred to. But let them mark what followed. That individual wrote home to England to obtain an insurance. What did that writing home for an insurance show? Did it show that he might remain there without fear of war? Certainly not. The merchants who traded to the Baltic were a very adventurous set of men—they chose to speculate—they stayed to load their cargoes, but they stayed too long. The British fleet was detained for a time to put the Danish fleet in a state to come to England. Why did not the vessels come away with the fleet? It was argued that the British fleet did not leave sufficient protection for the vessels in the Sound. That would be no ground for compensation. A large fleet such as that was must have been some time preparing to sail. Could those in the Baltic be ignorant that

such a fleet was about to depart or had already departed? Decidedly not. If they chose to remain they did so at their own risk, as they did for their own profit. That, then, would form no ground on which to sustain these claims. Something had been said about a conversation which took place at the Admiralty. Would that House say, that on the ground of a conversation said to be held at the Admiralty about which nothing certain existed, they should vote away a large sum of money. That was certainly too futile a ground to be upheld. No application on the subject existed in writing. It was asked, if they had thought it fit to take the fleet? why did they give any compensation at all. Compensation was given in the former cases, because it was intended at the time the fleet was taken to return it in perfect safety. When the Danes refused to surrender their fleet and assumed a hostile attitude, we were obliged to consider them as enemies, and the ships were therefore taken in state of warfare. It was to the Danish captains that compensation was given for their private expenses and freightage. It could not for a moment be contended that the property seized by the British Government from its enemies, should be applied to the payments of the losses of private individuals. He regretted the loss these parties had sustained in the pursuit of their commercial speculations; but there must be some broad and intelligible ground on which such an application should be made. The Spanish case, had been referred to as forming a precedent, but he denied that there was any analogy between these cases. Before the House granted the present application they would do well to consider what was the precedent which they were about to lay down; and he was satisfied that in every principle of justice and honesty, the parties now before the House had no claim whatever upon the public funds.

Mr. A. Chapman contended that the Government was bound to remunerate these parties, for the losses they had sustained, because, when application was made to them, they stated that there need be no apprehension whatever, and, acting upon that advice, one of his constituents, with his family, had been entirely ruined. He contended that these claims stood upon precisely the same footing as the book debts and the goods seized on shore. He himself had sent out a ship which had been seized at Copenhagen, but it had been afterward re-taken and delivered up to him by Admi-

ral Gambier. He trusted, that the Government would see the justice and expediency of no longer withholding the settlement of these claims.

The House divided : Ayes 75 ; Noes 64 ; Majority 11.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Alexander, N.	Humphrey, J.
Antrobus, E.	Hutt, W.
Arbuthnot, hon. H.	Inglis, Sir R. H.
Bagge, W.	Irton, S.
Baldwin, C. B.	Kemble, H.
Bannerman, A.	Lambton, H.
Barnard, E. G.	Langdale, hon. C.
Bateson, Sir R.	Lascelles, hon. W. S.
Bell, M.	Liddell, hon. H. T.
Bethell, R.	Lowther, hon. Colonel
Blackstone, W. S.	Lygon, hon. General
Broadley, H.	Mackenzie, T.
Buller, Sir J. Y.	Maclean, D.
Burr, H.	Muntz, G. F.
Chapman, A.	Neeld, J.
Chute, W. L. W.	Ord, W.
Collier, J.	Pakington, J. S.
Craig, W. G.	Palmer, G.
Darlington, Earl of	Parker, M.
Douglas, Sir C. E.	Perceval, Colonel
Dunbar, G.	Philips, M.
Duncombe, hon. W.	Pryme, G.
Egerton, W. T.	Reid, Sir J. R.
Feilden, W.	Round, C. G.
Ferguson, Colonel	Round, J.
Filmer, Sir E.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Freshfield, J. W.	Smith, J. A.
Gaskell, J. Milnes	Style, Sir C.
Grey, rt. hon. Sir C.	Thesiger, F.
Grimsditch, T.	Veres, Sir C. B.
Hawes, B.	Verner, Colonel
Hawkes, T.	Wakley, T.
Henniker, Lord	Wemyss, Captain
Hepburn, Sir T. B.	Williams, W.
Hinde, J. H.	Wodehouse, E.
Hindley, C.	Worsley, Lord
Hodgson, R.	TELLERS.
Hotham, Lord	Cresswell, C.
Hume, J.	Warburton, W.

#### *List of the NOES.*

Armstrong, A.	Graham, rt. hn. Sir J.
Baring, rt. hn. F. T.	Grey, rt. hon. Sir G.
Barry, G. S.	Guest, Sir J.
Bernal, R.	Hastie, A.
Briscoe, J. I.	Hector, C. J.
Brodie, W. B.	Herries, rt. hon. J. C.
Brotherton, J.	Hobhouse, rt. hn. Sir J.
Buck, L. W.	Hobhouse, T. B.
Buller, C.	Hoskins, K.
Busfield, W.	Howard, P. H.
Campbell, Sir J.	Howard, hn. C. W. G.
Carew, hon. R. S.	Labouchere, rt. hn. M.
Childers, J. W.	Listowel, Earl of
Corry, hon. H.	Lushington, rt. hn. S.
Dalmeny, Lord	Macaulay, rt. hn. T. B.
Ferguson, Sir R. A.	Marshall, W.
Goulburn, rt. hon. H.	Morpeth, Viscount

Nicholl, J.	Strutt, E.
O'Brien, W. S.	Sugden, rt. hn. Sir E.
Paget, Colonel	Surrey, Earl of
Palmerston, Viscount	Talbot, C. R. M.
Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.	Thornely, T.
Peel, rt. hn. Sir R.	Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Pigot, rt. hn. D.	Turner, E.
Pinney, W.	Verney, Sir H.
Rich, H.	Vernon, G. H.
Russell, Lord J.	Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.
Rutherford, rt. hn. A.	Wyse, T.
Sheil, rt. hn. R. L.	Yates, J. A.
Smith, B.	Young, J.
Smith, R. V.	
Spencer, hn. Captain	TELLERS.
Stanley, Lord	O'Ferrall, M.
Stanfield, W. R. C.	Solicitor, General

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS.]** Sir J. Y. Buller moved the third reading of the Municipal Corporations Bill.

The House divided on the motion:—  
Ayes 64 ; Noes 9 : Majority 45.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Baldwin, C. B.	Kemble, H.
Barnard, E. G.	Mackinnon, W. A.
Broadley, H.	O'Brien, W. S.
Brocklehurst, J.	O'Ferrall, R. M.
Brodie, W. B.	Palmerston, Viscount
Brotherton, J.	Parker, J.
Buller, C.	Parker, M.
Burr, H.	Perceval, Colonel
Busfield, W.	Pigot, rt. hn. D.
Campbell, Sir J.	Pinney, W.
Chapman, A.	Pryme, G.
Cochrane, Sir T. J.	Rundle, J.
Ferguson, Colonel	Russell, Lord J.
Grey, rt. hn. Sir C.	Rutherford, rt. hn. A.
Grey, rt. hn. Sir G.	Sheil, rt. hn. R. L.
Grimsditch, T.	Talbot, C. R. M.
Guest, Sir J.	Trench, Sir F.
Harcourt, G. G.	Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Hawes, B.	Turner, E.
Hector, C. J.	Villiers, hon. C. P.
Herries, rt. hn. J. C.	Wakley, T.
Hinde, J. H.	Warburton, H.
Hindley, C.	Wilde, Sir T.
Hobhouse, T. B.	Wynn, rt. hn. C. W.
Hoskins, K.	Wyse, T.
Howard, P. H.	
Humphrey, J.	TELLERS.
Hutt, W.	Buck, L. W.
Inglis, Sir R. H.	Buller, Sir J. Y.

#### *List of the NOES.*

Baring, rt. hn. F. T.	Thornely, T.
Cresswell, C.	Williams, W.
Morris, D.	Yates, J. A.
Smith, J. A.	TELLERS.
Smith, B.	Douglas, Sir C.
Style, Sir C.	Maclean, D.

Bill read a third time and passed.

**BRIEBRY AT ELECTIONS.]** Lord John

*Russell* took the opportunity of stating how he meant to proceed with the Bribery at Elections Bill. If he could expect under existing circumstances, to obtain attention to the different clauses in committee, and due deliberation upon the whole subject, he should be very desirous of carrying the measure through its remaining stages. He could hardly hope that such would be the case; but he was quite ready to take any course the House might think expedient.

*Sir R. Peel* remarked, that he had voted for the second reading, and he was most anxious, that the offences of bribery and treating should be defined, that it might be known what bribery and treating were in the eye of the law. It was material also to consider the propriety of requiring a declaration from parties appointed to offices, in order to make it more secure that they were not given away for services rendered at elections, and thereby converted into a species of bribery. Whatever attempt might be made to define bribery, he hoped it would be a successful one, and that the House would not now adopt a course in that respect which it might at some future time regret. It would be inconvenient to pass a law which it was necessary afterwards to amend. So few days would now elapse before the House was dismissed, that he thought the noble Lord would exercise a sound discretion if he did not press the bill.

*Mr. Wynn* thought some portions of the measure valuable, and was unwilling to abandon them, although it would perhaps be better to consider the whole subject together.

*Lord John Russell* proposed that the House should resolve itself into committee.

*Mr. Wynn* repeated his opinion as to the great value of some of the clauses, particularly those compelling witnesses to give evidence of bribery before election committees. If those clauses were persevered in now, it would, of course, be necessary to give the witnesses indemnity. At present, witnesses before courts of law were protected from the consequences of their evidence, but such was not the case before election committees, where it was even more important. He thought, that these clauses might be separated from the rest of the bill.

*Mr. S. O'Brien* urged, that no time could be more proper for passing such a bill than the present, when the country was on the eve of a general election.

*Lord John Russell* thought, that the

House might now go into committee on those clauses which were admitted to be unobjectionable.

*Sir R. H. Inglis* said, his right hon. Friend (*Sir R. Peel*) had left the House under the impression that the bill would not be proceeded with that evening.

*Lord John Russell* said, the right hon. Baronet's objection was to the introduction of a definition of bribery to which the House might not afterwards adhere.

*Mr. Wakley* said, he had understood the noble Lord (*J. Russell*) to say, that he was prepared to go on with the bill if the House were so disposed, and he did not know of any question which could at present occupy the time of the House so advantageously for the country.

*Mr. W. Wynn* was of opinion, that the present laws against bribery were sufficiently severe, but the difficulty was to put them in execution, as it was almost impossible to bring the proof home to anybody so as to secure a conviction. To this inconvenience it would be of course exceedingly desirable to apply a remedy.

House in Committee.

The first five clauses were abandoned, other clauses were agreed to.

*Mr. W. S. O'Brien* submitted the following clause;—

"And be it enacted, that every Member returned to serve in Parliament, shall, after taking the oaths prescribed to be taken at the Table of the House of Commons, before he becomes entitled to sit and vote, also make and subscribe the following declaration—

"I do hereby solemnly affirm and declare, that I have not, directly or indirectly, made use of any bribery for the purpose of being elected at the late election as a Member of this House for the county of \_\_\_\_\_ (or county of a city, town, or borough, as the case may be)."

"And be it enacted, that if any person shall make and subscribe such declaration falsely, every such person, being duly convicted thereof, shall incur and suffer such pains, penalties, and disabilities, as persons convicted of wilful and corrupt perjury are by law liable to, and may be prosecuted for the same at any period within five years after he shall have made such declaration."

Clause brought up.

On the question that it be read a second time,

*Mr. Warburton* said, his only doubt as to the proposition was, would it be effectual for the purpose and prevent bribery? Would it not have the effect of inducing persons to believe that elections were purer than they really were, and of shrouding

corrupt transactions from the public? It would be said, "Can you believe that bribery is practised when a solemn declaration is made that it was not?" He would refer to the sale of commissions in the army. In the general orders and regulations of the army, some years ago, was the form of a declaration respecting the sale of commissions to be made by an officer selling a commission, which was made and certified "on the word and honour of an officer and a gentleman, that the party had not demanded or accepted, would demand or accept, at any time or in any manner whatever, more than the sum limited and fixed by His Majesty's regulations as the full value of a commission." The purchaser made a similar declaration, and the colonel or commanding officer certified to his belief that the regulations had been strictly complied with, and that there had been no private bargain. That had been the regulation in the army; he did not know whether it was so at present. Every one knew, however, that the regulation had not been conformed to in the slightest degree—that it had been considered absolutely a dead letter. Yet officers of the army claimed to be considered as the very pink of honour, and never suffered any aspersion to be cast upon their honour. The case to which he had been calling the attention of the House was not the only one of the kind; there was the oath administered to the Irish clergy of the established church, under the provisions of the 28th of Henry 8th, cap. 15, which was as little attended to as the declaration made on the sale of commissions in the army. In defiance of any declaration of the nature now proposed, agents employed at elections would go to Members after they had been returned and would say that some necessary expenses had been incurred, the precise details of which they could not then set forth; they would state the gross amount, and add, that if the hon. Member intended ever again to become a candidate for the borough, he had better pay the amount, and in that manner would these things be managed. He thought, therefore, that declarations would produce no practical effect. There was no one capable of being influenced by a declaration who would not feel as much bound by the obligation under which every good citizen lay—to observe the laws of the land.

Colonel *Sibthorp* had quitted the House some time ago under the impression that the noble Lord did not intend to proceed with the bill. His right hon. Friend the

Member for Tamworth was under the same impression, and was now absent, because he believed that the bill was not to be proceeded with; he therefore felt bound to protest against going on with the measure. He objected to the bill on this amongst other grounds, that its effect would be to restrain the higher and wealthier classes from aiding their humbler neighbours. If the bill passed into a law, a man could not give 5s. to a charitable assembly without exposing himself to the charge of bribery. He had several objections to make to the earlier clauses of the bill. [*The Chairman*: They are postponed.] In that case he should reserve any further observations which he might have to make until the report was brought up. He wished now, however, to be distinctly informed by the noble Lord whether he intended to go on with the bill.

Lord *J. Russell* said, he was glad that the hon. Member for Lincoln had put that question to him. What he had stated on a former occasion was this, that he would not proceed with the bill if the House, after considering its provisions, desired that it should not reach another stage, and he understood that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth had agreed to that; but, as the House was then engaged with another bill, the Speaker had very properly interposed. He had expected to collect the sense of the House as to whether they had better proceed with the measure or not. It had since occurred to him that the latter part of the present bill would form of itself a good measure, and, being separated from the first part, might be introduced as a substantive bill. He thought that to-night they might go on with the bill, as there would at the next stage be an opportunity afforded to the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth to take whatever course he might think the most expedient.

Sir *D. Norreys* thought the proposition of his hon. Friend the Member for Limerick a good one, and hoped that he would persist in it.

Mr. *E. Turner* thought, that the best form would be an oath taken before the returning officer. The candidate would be pledged before his constituents, and would run a greater risk of detection should he declare falsely.

Colonel *Percival* opposed the clause then before the House.

Mr. *Hobhouse* concurred in some of the objections which had been taken against the

clause, for he thought there was no form of declaration which could be laid on the Table of that House which might not be evaded. However, he thought, besides, there was something unjust in the clause, for it proposed to enact that any person found guilty of an improper declaration should be subjected to a certain penalty. Now that part of it, he conceived, would be unjust in its operation, if the word wilfully was not introduced. When Gentlemen of that House were disposed to put an end to bribery in reality, they had the remedy in their own hands; and if they had so sincerely, nothing would tend more to raise the character of that House, when it was known, that it was no longer to be contaminated by having its seats purchaseable.

Mr. *H. Hardinge* wished to know before what tribunal it was proposed that Members of that House should be tried. Was it before a parliamentary committee, which he conceived was a most objectionable course, or in a court of law?

Mr. *S. O'Brien* said he thought, that under the clause before the House, any person accused could be tried in the ordinary way.

Mr. *Brotherton* said, he would ask the House, whether they really wished to put an end to bribery? He did not think that men could be made honest by act of Parliament. The present bill, however, even if it did not answer all the objects for which it was intended, would have a moral effect on the country. It might be a discouragement to bribery, and make it fashionable for Members of Parliament to be elected without purchasing the votes of their constituents. As to the clause requiring a declaration to be made, that the Member did not use bribery, he thought there could be no objection to it. The clause could do no harm. There were many who had no fear of doing wrong, who would, however, have a fear of being detected in it, and as the man who was bribed might inform against the briber, such a declaration might be salutary. He was, he confessed, strongly in favour of any plan which would have the effect of effectually putting an end to bribery.

Mr. *Wakley* thought the question which the hon. Gentleman who last spoke had put to the House was much more easily asked than answered. For his part, he firmly believed that House was not sincere in its desire of getting rid of those corrupt and infamous practices which went on at elections. There was, in his opinion, but

one good cure for bribery, but that was a radical one; that cure was to be found in extending the constituencies, until they became too long for any pocket to reach them. He hoped the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, would get rid of his sentiments with regard to finality, and more especially from what his recent experience had taught him; and he (Mr. *Wakley*) trusted that noble Lord would, before long, come forward to propose that radical cure to which he had alluded. The declaration which had been introduced, might give the unscrupulous candidate an advantage over his more conscientious opponent. Besides, there were methods of taking advantage of it. Suppose, for instance, a man before an election put 4,000*l.* into his banker's hands, and told his agent that this was to be used only for the strict legal expenses of the election; and desired him, moreover, to take care that such directions should be strictly adhered to on account of the declaration which he was to make. Did they think that the agent, whose interest it was to carry the election, would scruple to spend every farthing of that money in bribery because of such an injunction? In conclusion, he would beg the hon. Member for Limerick, not to divide the House upon the clause, and expressed a hope, that the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, would soon come forward with that radical cure which would be the most effectual means of putting an end to the evil complained of.

Lord *J. Russell* could not undertake to give a declaration of any such intention as that which the hon. Member for Finsbury hinted at, because he thought it would be inoperative. With regard to the declaration, the propriety of which they were then discussing, if it had not a good effect, it would do harm; and he confessed that, having given that matter some very serious consideration, he could not persuade himself, that any very useful effect could be produced by this declaration. There were many persons who might not be guilty of any very corrupt practices, who might be unwilling, from conscientious scruples, to take such a declaration. And with regard to the generality of persons, he feared they might not be at all deterred by such a declaration, but would, after a short time, and when its first terrors had passed away, consider it, as many other things were considered, as merely a matter of course. He did not think it was expedient to have any

new solemn declarations introduced which were not binding. He was by no means prepared to say, that this was a subject which would not be deserving of future consideration, but at present he was not disposed to adopt the clause then before them, and he hoped the House would not now press it.

Mr. S. O'Brien would divide the committee upon the clause.

Mr. Courtenay apprehended legislation of that description was totally useless; and moreover, if such a clause as that was introduced, it would be unprecedented in the legislation of this country. He contended, that whenever they legislated uselessly, they legislated mischievously. He opposed the clause.

The committee divided: Ayes 22; Noes 51: Majority 29.

#### *List of the AYES.*

Armstrong, A.	Pryme, G.
Berkeley, hon. C.	Roche, W.
Brocklehurst, J.	Rundle, J.
Brotherton, J.	Stanley, hon. W. O.
Busfield, W.	Turner, E.
D'Eyncourt, right hon.	Wilde, Sir T.
C. T.	Williams, W.
Hawes, B.	Wood, Sir M.
Heathcoat, J.	Wood, B.
Hector, C. J.	Yates, J. A.
Humphery, J.	TELLERS.
Morris, D.	O'Brien, W. S.
Paget, Lord A.	Norreys, Sir D.

#### *List of the NOES.*

Ainsworth, P.	Lowther, J. H.
Attwood, W.	Mackenzie, W. F.
Baines, E.	Mackinnon, W. A.
Baldwin, C. B.	Maunsell, T. P.
Baring, right hon. F. T.	Milnes, R. M.
Barnard, E. G.	Morrison, J.
Barrington, Viscount	Ossulston, Lord
Buller, C.	Pakington, J. S.
Clay, W.	Palmer, G.
Clements, H. J.	Parker, J.
Cochrane, Sir T. J.	Perceval, Colonel
Courtenay, P.	Pusey, P.
Drummond, H. H.	Rae, right hon. Sir W.
Egerton, Sir P.	Rutherford, rt. hn. A.
Eliot, Lord	Sanderson, R.
Evans, W.	Sibthorp, Colonel
Gladstone, W. E.	Smith, B.
Grey, right hon. Sir G.	Thompson, Mr. Ald.
Grimsditch, T.	Trench, Sir F.
Hardinge, rt. hn. Sir H.	Troubridge, Sir E. T.
Hinde, J. H.	Walsh, Sir J.
Hodgson, R.	Wilbraham, G.
Inglis, Sir R. H.	Winnington, H. J.
Jones, Captain	Wood, G. W.
Kemble, H.	TELLERS.
Lefroy, right hon. T.	Warburton, H.
Listowel, Earl of	Hobhouse, T.

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Clause rejected.

Mr. S. O'Brien moved the following clause, of which he had also given notice:—

"And whereas doubts have arisen whether the payment by candidates of the travelling expenses of electors, and of other expenses necessarily incurred by electors in order to enable them to give their votes at elections, ought to be considered as bribery: Be it enacted, that in case any elector shall reside at a distance of more than five miles from the place of polling at which his vote is received, the payment of the expenses of such elector, by any candidate, shall not be deemed to be bribery, provided that the payment made to each such elector, in consideration of such expenses, shall not exceed an allowance of 5s. for his expenses at the place of poll, with an additional allowance of 6d. per mile for each mile of distance between the place of polling at which the vote of such elector is received, and the place at which such elector usually resides; but any payment to electors for their expenses other than the allowances aforesaid shall be deemed to be bribery under this act."

Sir R. Bateson suggested, that it would remedy the inconvenience if the English system of having different polling places at convenient distances was introduced into Ireland.

Sir George Grey reminded his hon. Friend, the Member for Limerick, that the clause which he had proposed would be an infringement of the understanding on which the Bill had gone into committee, that nothing should be introduced defining what constituted bribery.

Mr. S. O'Brien said, that in consequence of what had fallen from his right hon. Friend (Sir George Grey), he should not persevere in his motion.

Motion withdrawn.

The bill passed through committee.

House resumed.

The report to be further considered.

THAMES EMBANKMENT AND RAILWAY.] Sir F. Trench rose pursuant to notice, to move the re-appointment of the Select Committee on Thames Embankment, for the purpose of considering evidence in support of a plan to form upon the embankment a quay of communication from Blackfriars-bridge to Hungerford-market; the whole expense of which can be provided for by a railroad between the same termini, without any demand for the public money, or any reference to the value of the land recovered from the river. The hon. Member said, that from the report of the committee appointed last year, it appeared, that in conse-

quence of the works connected with the erection of the new London-bridge, the terrace on which the Houses of Parliament were building, and other extensive alterations in the river, a quantity of mud and rubbish had accumulated, which, besides causing inconvenient and irregular deeps and shallows, had, from vegetation springing up on the accumulated material, caused an unwholesome and polluted atmosphere along the banks of the river. The gentlemen of the city, it appeared, were afraid of the expense requisite to carry the desired improvement into effect. The hon. Member observed, that, in the committee of last year, evidence had been given of this fact, that the mud in the river had accumulated on each side to a very great extent, that in some places vegetation had actually commenced, and which was well manured from the filthy sewers, and that, in short, the atmosphere in the immediate neighbourhood of the banks was polluted almost to infection. The navigation of the river had been also very much impeded by the removal of the old London-bridge. Where the river was narrow the depth had increased, but where it was wide, shoals had been formed, upon which the backs of barges were very frequently broken; this circumstance also had the effect of keeping barges waiting the tide for two or three hours, the result of which was, that often a whole day was lost, and great expense incurred. By the plan proposed, no injury would be done to any persons engaged on the river, such as boatmen or bargemen; on the contrary, they would be enabled to navigate the river at periods when they could not do so at present, for a number of shoals would be removed, and the whole bed of the river deepened. No existing accommodation would be interfered with, the merchant would go to his wharf as at present, and the coal-barges, if they chose it, would lie as before, upon their soft mud. The adoption of a plan for such a quay would be a great improvement to the metropolis, and it would greatly facilitate the communication between one part of the town and another. He was aware that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had refused to make any advance of the public money for this purpose, but he was not surprised at this, as the right hon. Gentleman had so little at his disposal. He (Sir F. Trench), having regarded the subject as a most important one, and finding that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not disposed to aid in carrying out the plan which had

been suggested for removing these obstructions, finding also, that the committee had not been re-appointed, and being apprehensive that the land which he proposed to be redeemed from the river might pass into the hands of private companies—laid the plan before Lord Duncannon, as the head of the Woods and Forests, and his Lordship, after two or three days' consideration, had come to the opinion, that it was not only a practicable, but a desirable one. That noble Lord said, he thought he could not originate it himself, but that it should be submitted for discussion to Parliament. He (Sir F. Trench), at the desire of that noble Lord, had obtained the opinion of those eminent engineers, Sir F. Smith and Mr. Walker, who both concurred, that the plan was not only practicable, but might be executed with profit, and put into the hands of Government a large sum of money for the further improvement and embellishment of the metropolis on the southern side of the river Thames. He did not wish to carry the subject further at present than to obtain the evidence of those two gentlemen upon the plan, which he had suggested, in order, that it might be submitted to the Government in a proper and complete form, for it was by the Government, and not by a public company, he wished to see this project carried into effect. The railroad could be readily carried along the embankment, and the profits arising from it would be enormous; while the expense would be comparatively trifling. He had made some calculations on the subject, and he found if the charge was made at 6d. for railroad conveyance from Hungerford to Blackfriars, four carriages going each way, and carrying each trip 48 passengers, the gross receipt in one year would be 104,832*l.*, which at 20 years purchase, represents a capital of 2,096,640*l.*, leaving a million at the disposal of the Government to be applied to the improvement of the banks of the river, and the embellishment of the metropolis. If the charge were but 3d., still there would be 500,000*l.* at the disposal of the Government, and the works all completed and paid for; and he was satisfied, that if the railway were extended to London Bridge, the profits would be doubled. By such a plan, a gentleman might be carried from London Bridge to Hungerford Market, in less than four minutes, and the railway would work in fog and frost, when



the steamers could not, and the omnibuses could not, and when the Brighton and Kentish railways were brought to London Bridge, Gentlemen might imagine what an accession of passengers there would be; and what an accommodation to the railroad travellers, instead of struggling slowly through crowded streets for half an hour or an hour, to be carried from London Bridge to Charing-cross in four minutes. In addition to the favourable opinion of the two engineers he had mentioned, Mr. Bidder, once known as the celebrated calculating boy, had gone over the figures with him, and had no doubt of their accuracy. When he explained to the noble Lord, at the head of the Woods and Forests, the great beauty and utility of his plan, that noble Lord said, he heartily wished it was in operation, for Mr. Barry, the architect of the new Houses, was constantly complaining of the inconvenience and expense of carrying off the rubbish by barges. The hon. Gentleman concluded by saying, that he hoped the House would accede to his motion, as he intended to go no further at present than obtain information on the subject.

On the question being put.

Mr. Hawes said, that at this period of the Session it was utterly impossible for the House to go into an inquiry of this sort, involving as it did the interests of owners of property in the neighbourhood to an enormous amount, whilst the parties so interested had received no notice whatever upon the subject. The hon. Gentleman (Sir F. Trench), proposed that the committee should sit one day to examine two Gentlemen on one side of the question, and on the evidence of these Gentlemen he was to found some plan for the Government to carry out. Why, he knew of twenty-two witnesses to be examined against it. In the last Session of Parliament, when the chairman of the navigation committee of the City of London, was examined before the committee relative to the proposed embankment, he was asked—"Suppose that a solid embankment is made and a carriage way along it, do you believe, that property would not be injured by it?" To which he replied—"I have no doubt of it." Then he was asked—"You do not consider that having that thoroughfare would compensate for the injury done by the removal of their premises from the banks of the river." And he answered—"I do not." He believed it to be utterly impracticable, and should the

measure be carried out, utterly ruinous to property. However the House might be disposed to sympathise with the hon. and gallant Member, he deemed it impossible at this late period of the Session to have a fair inquiry entered into, because it must necessarily be an *ex parte* inquiry. He begged to say, that if driven to it he would divide the House upon the question.

Mr. Kemble doubted very much, even though a committee were granted, that the hon. and gallant Member would be able to get a sufficient number together to form a *quorum*. He, therefore, trusted that he would not persevere in his motion.

Mr. Pryme said, he never saw a scheme that appeared to him *prima facie* to be more desirable. He hoped if the hon. and gallant Member was not able to obtain his committee this Session, he would in a future Parliament persevere in bringing forward his motion.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that he hoped the hon. and gallant Member would, in justice to his own project, and in justice to the various interests that would be affected by it, consent to withdraw his motion, and bring it forward at some future period. At this late period of the Session, he trusted, that the hon. and gallant Member, would not press the House to come to a decision upon this question.

Sir F. Trench withdrew his motion.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, June 11, 1841.

MINUTEN.] Bills. Read a first time:—Dublin Wide Streets; Municipal Corporations; School Sites; Banks of Issue; Dog Chits; Loan Societies.—Read a second time:—Administration of Justice; Punishment of Death; Sewers.—Read a third time:—Sugar Duties; Tithe Compositions (Ireland).

Petitions presented. By Lord Redesdale, Lord Rayleigh, the Earl of Yarborough, and Lord Beaumont, from Cornwall, Essex, Lincolnshire, and places in Yorkshire, against a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Earl of Rosebery, and Earl Fitzwilliam, from Edinburghshire, Paisley, and other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Bishop of Winchester, from Peckham, against the Jews' Declaration Bill.—By the Marquess of Breadalbane, from places in Scotland, for the Suppression of Idolatry in India, and for the Suppression of Sunday Travelling; and from the Corporation of Edinburgh, against any Alteration of the Banking system of Scotland.

BRITISH AUXILIARY LEGION.] The Marquess of Londonderry would take the liberty of asking the noble Viscount at the head of the Government, whether he was prepared to give any reply to the question which he put to him the other night, respecting the failure of the payment of the



half-yearly instalment due from the Spanish Government to the British Legion; and which question the noble Viscount said, he would answer after he had made some inquiries on the subject?

Viscount *Melbourne* was understood to say, that instructions had been sent out to the English Ambassador at the Court of Madrid, to press these claims, and that he anticipated a favourable result from his interference. It was true that the instalment had not been paid.

The Marquess of *Londonderry* wished to know what instructions had been sent out to the British Ambassador at Madrid. He was surprised that Sir De Lacy Evans, placed in the situation in which he was, had not insisted before this on knowing what those instructions were. It must be particularly remarked that Sir De Lacy Evans, in his letter to George Service, Esq., the chairman of the committee of officers, stated,

"That, as an additional guarantee, the Spanish Government, also deposits in the National Bank of St. Fernando, the sum of 30,000,000 of reals vellon, in 5 per cent. stock, bonds for 300,000*l.*, at the disposal of her Britannic Majesty's Minister at Madrid, in the event, however, of the non-payment at the proper time of any half year's instalment, the British Minister at Madrid is empowered to direct the sale of the above guarantee, in order to cover the amount of such unpaid instalment, giving fifteen days' notice of such sale to the Spanish Government."

Now, it would be a satisfaction to him to know if the British Minister at Madrid, had received instructions to give this notice of sale, and what were the precise steps which had been taken by the British Government to prevent these unfortunate individuals from being again thrown over and deceived by the delusive promises of Spain. He thought, that the hon. and gallant Officer who had written that letter, and who was party to this solemn negotiation and compact, was bound himself to force the question upon the attention of her Majesty's Government, unless some very good reasons to the contrary existed. He knew of none. He would not neglect his duty to these brave and unfortunate men, however others might think proper to remain silent, and if, before the dissolution, he did not receive complete satisfaction on this most important point, he should undoubtedly bring the case formally before the House.

Viscount *Melbourne* said, that the in-

structions which had been sent out to our Ambassador were, to press in the strongest manner for the fulfilment of the engagements which the Spanish Government had contracted.

Subject at an end.

**DISTURBANCE AT MANCHESTER.]** The Earl of *Wilton* begged to call the attention of the noble Secretary for the Home Department, to a transaction of a very disgraceful character, which had recently occurred in St. Stephen's-square, Manchester. He was informed that the mayor of the town having refused—and in so doing exercised, as he thought, a wise discretion—to call an open-air meeting to take into consideration the repeal of the Corn-laws, the repeal of the Union, and various other matters. Three county magistrates headed a tumultuous assemblage of persons who paraded the streets, carrying flags bearing most inflammatory inscriptions. They then formed themselves into a meeting in St. Stephen's-square, and the three county magistrates stood upon the hustings, and witnessed the whole proceedings. A riot of a serious nature occurred, during which eleven individuals were wounded and carried to the infirmary. It appeared also, that although this took place in the presence of a large body of police, they did not interfere in any way to prevent the riot, and not a single individual was taken into custody. At the close of the proceedings, the three magistrates again headed the assemblage, and returned home parading the streets as before, to the great terror of the peaceable inhabitants of Manchester.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, from what he already knew of the case, he was satisfied that the noble Earl was misinformed upon almost all points. He supposed the noble Earl alluded to a transaction which occurred on Wednesday week. He had received a report upon the subject from Sir C. Shaw, who was in command of the constabulary force at Manchester, and he had reason to think that that officer exercised a sound discretion in not interfering on the occasion until the proper time arrived. The disturbance at one time was likely to have been of a serious character, and it was owing to the prudence and vigilance of Sir C. Shaw, and the admirable conduct of the men under his command that serious damage was not committed. The riot, he believed, occurred between two parties who were violently excited against each other, but the result had been

much exaggerated. There were one or two points referred to by the noble Earl upon which he was not informed, and with respect to them he would make further inquiries.

The Earl of *Willon* said, that the circumstance of eleven persons having been sent to the infirmary was a sufficient proof that the riot was of a serious character; but what he particularly wished to direct the noble Marquess's attention to was, the conduct of the three county magistrates.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, that he had no information upon that point—it might naturally be supposed that it was not likely to form the subject of any part of Sir C. Shaw's report. He would inquire into the matter. The persons taken to the infirmary were not much hurt; they left it very soon.

**Jews' Declaration.]** The Marquess of Bute moved, that the Jews' Declaration Bill be read a third time.

The Bishop of *Llandaff* said, that as he had a very strong opinion on this subject, he could not let this opportunity pass without troubling their Lordships with a few observations. In the first place, he trusted, that the House would not in a covert and insidious way pass a measure of this kind, the object of which was, under the pretext of extending an indulgence to a particular class of religionists, to abandon the principle of regarding religion as a matter of importance in the persons who were to exercise civil authority amongst us. He knew that there were many wise, even religious men, who thought that religion was no concern of the State; but then he said, let a measure be brought fairly forward on that principle. The indulgence given by the repeal of the Test Act was to Christians, but this bill proposed to extend the indulgence which was subsequently granted by another act to Quakers, Moravians, and Separatists, to the Jewish community, provided they made a certain declaration. The repeal of the Test Act, to which he was himself a party, expressly declared, that no other test should be required except a single declaration of belief in Christianity—"in the presence of God, on the true faith of a Christian." The Quakers, Moravians, and Separatists, conscientiously objected to take that declaration; and by an act of her present Majesty a declaration was substituted, by which they declared, that they would not exercise any authority or power in virtue of any office

to injure the Protestant Church as by law established. Now, the Jews denied the very foundation of the Christian religion. They declared its Divine Founder to be an impostor—a blasphemer. He did not say this with any feeling of reproach towards the Jews, but to demonstrate that this was an ill-framed measure. If it were intended to be said, that no man ought to be excluded from office on account of religion, then that principle should be asserted in a substantive measure; but to tack it on to the former measures which had granted indulgence to fellow-Christians, was almost, he might say, a fraud upon the Legislature. It had been asked, what danger would ensue from this alteration of the law? He did not apprehend any actual danger to the State, but the danger which he apprehended was, that the exclusively Christian character of the State would be lost, and encouragement would be given to the notion, already too prevalent, that religion was a matter of indifference in statesmen and men in office. For these reasons, he should move, that the bill be read a third time that day three months.

Lord *Lyttleton* said, that if he did not view this measure as a stepping-stone to the admission of Jews to Parliament he should not oppose it. It was said, that the law as it at present stood was easily evaded; but he imagined, that it could not be said, that the law could not be made so as to prevent its being evaded. He should imagine, that the persons who would be desirous of obtaining municipal offices would be in a station of life to have the common honesty not to evade the law.

The Earl of *Winchelsea* viewed this measure as one deeply fraught with danger to the religion of this country. If they granted this measure, in consistency they must subsequently grant any ulterior measure which might be brought forward to admit Jews into Parliament. Some people thought, that religion was merely a matter between a man and his God; but the Bible and New Testament both, showed that that was an untenable position. A Jew, at any rate a religious Jew, would not admit Christians to legislate for him, and why should the Christian admit the Jew? He respected that body, and recollected the position which they had held under the Mosaic dispensation, and if the film were taken from their eyes he would consent to the motion; but on religious grounds he felt himself compelled to support the right rev. Prelate.

The Earl of *Wicklow* did not consider, that in supporting the bill he was in the slightest degree pledged, or liable to be called upon hereafter, to open the walls of Parliament to persons of the Jewish persuasion. He had always opposed bills for that purpose, and should continue to do so, considering it improper that persons not being Christians should be legislators in a Christian country. But the bill then before their Lordships was a measure of a very different character. It was a measure which he was almost disposed to think did not confer upon the Jews by law, any privilege which they did not already possess. That Jews were eligible to offices in corporations was evident from the fact, that Jews were to be found in three of the corporations of this kingdom. Those municipal bodies possessed the discretionary power of admitting Jews or not, and the object of the present measure was to remove that anomaly. If Jews ought not to be admitted, the law should be altered so as to exclude them; and if they ought to be admitted, that admission should take place under the sanction of a general legislative measure. He contended, that the Legislature should decide whether or not Jews should be admissible to the corporate bodies of this country, without reference to any other question; because there was not the slightest shadow of reason for supposing that a measure for their admission into corporations would be followed up by a measure for admitting them into Parliament. No less than thirty-eight of the largest towns of the country had petitioned Parliament to pass the present bill, while no petitions had been presented against it. He at least had heard of none. The principle contained in the bill had been already established by the removal of those disabilities which prevented Jews from being elected sheriffs. And it was certainly throwing the law into ridicule to argue that Jews might be elected sheriffs, but must not be allowed to exercise the functions which belonged to the other members of a corporation. Jews had been elected sheriffs in London, in a county in which his noble Friend possessed property, and in Sussex; and he was therefore somewhat surprised to hear his noble Friend oppose this measure upon religious grounds. The grounds upon which he supported the bill were—first, because it would remove the absurdity in the law which he had pointed out; secondly, because Jews were to be admitted to civil offices

for which they were best fitted were connected with corporate bodies; and thirdly, because he conceived that no injury could follow upon their admission to those benefits which the constitution bestowed upon persons who were born British subjects.

The Bishop of *St. David's*: My Lords, in rising to offer myself for a few minutes to your Lordships' attention, I feel how much I shall stand in need of your indulgence, not only because it is the first time I have had the honour of addressing you, but because I find myself placed in a delicate and truly painful situation. I have the misfortune to differ from the most rev. Prelate who last week opposed the second reading of this bill, and, of course, from the right rev. Prelate who opened the debate upon it to-night, and probably from the majority of my right rev. brethren, I had not the advantage of hearing the arguments adduced by the most rev. Prelate on the former occasion, and know nothing of them but what I could collect from what was probably a very imperfect and incorrect report. Those which I saw certainly did not convince me. One of the observations attributed to the most rev. Prelate was, I think, that the Jewish community, as a body, was not at all interested in the measure now before your Lordships, and that it could only serve to gratify the pride and ambition of a few eminent individuals of that persuasion. Now, this is an opinion from which I must entirely dissent. My own view of the subject is grounded not on any personal experience—for which of course I have had no opportunities—but on the general principles of human nature. And, judging from those, I conceive, that it is highly probable, or rather I might say, absolutely certain, that every member of the Jewish community would feel gratified and raised in self-esteem by the honours and privileges which may be thrown open to it, though in the nature of things they are such as can only be enjoyed by a few of its most distinguished members. And this leads me to observe, that the advantage which may be expected to result from this measure is one of great importance. Its object is to conciliate the affections of a very large and powerful body of men to the land of their birth, to which they are attached by many ties, though to a certain extent, they always remain foreigners and aliens. It is to me, that this is a right to operate as an arg of this measure, a strong objection.

to counterbalance it, and I think none such have been shown. I have listened with all the attention in my power to the speech of the right rev. Prelate who opened the debate, but his arguments have not altered my view of the question. I do not know, whether I shall be able to recollect them all, so as to place them before your Lordships, but, if I can do so, I believe there is not one which I shall not be able to answer. And, in the first place, I would meet the right rev. Prelate on the purport and meaning of the bill. The right rev. Prelate considers it as amounting to a declaration on the part of the Legislature, that religion is a matter of indifference. Perhaps that may be one view which may be taken of the import of the measure. But I submit that there is another, which is at least quite as just and reasonable. It appears to me, that it may be interpreted in a very different manner. Possibly, the view I take of it may appear to some right rev. Prelates and noble Lords very common place, superficial, and even absurd; but it is one which I at least am able to comprehend. I conceive, that this measure, if passed, will simply amount to a declaration of the Legislature, that in its judgment no other qualities are requisite for the due discharge of the municipal offices referred to in the bill, than that degree of probity and integrity which may be found in persons of every religious persuasion. And certainly, I see no reason why an exception should be made to this maxim in the case of the Jews. There is one little fact relating to this part of the subject, which has been passed over in the course of this debate, but which appears to me to deserve a share of your Lordships' attention, especially when an attempt is made to sink the Jews below the Mahometans in the religious scale, and this is, that the Jews are believers in the Old Testament. And I would ask your Lordships, whether there are not to be found in that part of the word of God precepts and rules, sufficient to ensure the performance of the duties of those municipal offices, on the part of those who acknowledge its authority. The right rev. Prelate also argued, and, if I am not mistaken, this is one of the arguments attributed to the most rev. Prelate in the discussion of last week, that this measure would alter the Christian character of our institutions. I may be thought to be taking a bold line, but I venture to assert, that the effect of the measure will not be to alter that character in the slightest degree. I conceive, that the utmost it

will do, will be to take away one slight indication of that character. I do not say, that I would part even with that, unless I saw some prospect of advantage to compensate for it; but I think in the present case, there is a great and substantial gain to counterbalance that insignificant loss. But, in fact, I have not heard it contended, that the immediate effect of the measure was such as need excite much alarm. The main objection brought against it was of quite another kind, and pointed to the future, to a danger much more distant and undefined. We are told, that if we take this step, we do not know what it may lead to, we shall not know where to stop or how to draw the line. This is an argument which never fails to be used when concessions of this kind are called for. It is one which from its vagueness it is not easy to answer. It reminds me of a fallacy which, as your Lordships may know, was in considerable vogue among the sophists of antiquity, who pretended to be able to prove that there was no difference between a mountain and a mole-hill; because if you continually added or subtracted a single grain of dust, you would at last swell the mole-hill to a mountain, or reduce the mountain to a mole-hill, and yet if at each step of the process you were asked what the thing was, you would call it by the same name. But I do not know, that any one ever carried this so far as to say, that by taking away a single grain of dust you changed the mountain into a mole-hill, because that would be the effect if the operation should be repeated often enough. The right rev. Prelate also took a glance at the history of the Jews. He adverted to the various changes which had taken place in their condition, and I am glad to find, that he contemplates those changes with approbation and satisfaction. But it appears, that the right rev. Prelate has been led by his historical retrospect to a very different conclusion from that which I should have expected him to draw from it. It seems, that he approved of everything that has been done up to this moment to improve the condition of the Jews, but he thinks that we have now reached the precise point where we ought to stop. I must say, that my own historical retrospect suggests the opposite inference. When I review the history of the Jewish people, I see that there was a time—in ages of darkness and barbarism—when they were outraged and degraded, and oppressed, both by the law, and beside the law, and against the law. Their condition

has been gradually ameliorated. And I find, that in proportion as the treatment they have received has become milder, civilization and humanity have been making progress, and Christianity itself has been growing purer and purer, and I must own, that this is a consideration which tends to prepossess me in favour of this measure, and which ought, I think, to recommend it to your Lordships. The right rev. Prelate also made an objection to the form in which this measure has been introduced. He complained with all the precautions against the possibility of a suspicion, that he meant anything personally offensive, that his amiable nature could suggest—that there was something covert and insidious in the framing of the bill, because it couples the members of the Jewish community with those Christian sects for whose relief the declaration required from persons elected to municipal offices was modified, I confess I can see no ground for this charge. It is expressly provided, that all persons who would take advantage of the relief provided by this bill, must profess themselves to be of the Jewish religion. There seems, therefore, to be no room for any mistake in persons of ordinary information on the subject. But I would say, that even if the form of the measure were not the best that could have been devised, this would not be a sufficient reason to induce your Lordships to reject the substance. This measure may not, perhaps, be one of strict justice; but I conceive it to be one of liberal policy, or of politic liberality. I am not yet ashamed of that word, and I hope it will not prejudice your Lordships against the measure now before you.

The Bishop of *London* said, that as their Lordships evinced considerable impatience to divide upon this Bill, he would make only a few observations. He had heard with great mortification the speech of the right rev. Prelate. He intended nothing unkind in the expression, but it could not but be mortifying to him, knowing the weight necessarily attached to the great learning and powerful eloquence of the right rev. Prelate, when he exerted those talents and employed that eloquence in the cause of error. The right rev. Prelate had used in his speech not a little of that sophistry of which he had himself spoken—of unintentional sophistry. He had omitted the real point at issue. The right rev. Prelate had taken up certain detached points of the arguments of his adversaries, and those he had

attempted, and perhaps successfully, to overthrow; but he had, at the same time, skilfully glided over the chief points of those arguments. The important principle involved in this bill was this—whether the State should pay that homage to the Christian religion which it had hitherto paid. He would pass over the question, whether this bill would lead to the admission of the Jews into the Houses of Parliament. It was confessed by the right rev. Prelate himself, that the consent to this measure would be, if not a change itself, at any rate, an indication of a change in the religious feeling of the country, but there could be no indiscretion if there were no changes. There could not be one without the other. This was the simple point on which he would look at the question. It had always been the wise policy of this country to pay homage to the Christian religion in the doctrines of the Established Church. It was deemed expedient to extend the limits beyond which no one could find admission into the councils of the empire. It was deemed expedient to admit the Christian Dissenters of all persuasions. But still, the Legislature of the country was paying homage to Christianity—though those were admitted who were members of a church which they thought was not the Church of Christ. Were they now to do away with that homage? for that was the ultimate object of the present bill. It had been said, that even now there were in the councils of the empire unbelievers and heretics. God forbid, that there should be! But enough was done to uphold the Christian character of the country, for none were admitted into Parliament or the Government, who did not pretend to be Christians. But now men claimed to be admitted (first they merely asked admission into municipal bodies, but they would, if that were granted, claim admission into legislative assemblies) who were not only not Christians, but who were the strongest and fiercest opponents of Christianity—those who contemned, despised, and reviled the Christian religion and its founder. This was the single point on which he rested his opposition. He professed and entertained the most sincere respect for many individuals of the Jewish persuasion. There were amongst them men of the most unbounded liberality of the most indiscriminate charity—and on that point they set an example which it

would be well for Christians to follow. There were amongst them men of honour—men of veracity—of devout and zealous religion. But here he must be allowed to say, that their real religion was frequently concealed from their people—that the Jews were too often taught, not the religion of Moses, but the religion of the Talmud—not the true word of God, but the doctrines of human tradition. This led him to a topic which had been alluded to by the right rev. Prelate, the Bishop of St. David's, in answer to the speech made a few evenings ago, by the most rev. Prelate, the Archbishop of Canterbury. The most rev. Prelate had said, that this measure would alone gratify the vanity and ambition of a few individuals; and the right rev. Prelate replied, that the honour conferred on a few, would reflect on the whole body. Now, though it was true as a general principle, that an honour conferred on certain individuals, was reflected on the body to which they belonged, yet he believed that would not be the case in the present instance. He had made many inquiries on the subject, and had found that few, very few of the great body of the Jewish people cared anything at all about the success of this measure. The lower classes of their society it did not in the least degree affect, and many of the higher and more religious Jews entertained most serious doubts whether they could receive the privilege thus to be conferred upon them. They doubted, and he, looking at the commands of the Old Testament, especially of the prophetic writings, entertained a similar doubt; they doubted the propriety of such a step. That, however, was, for them to decide, not for him. The sole view of the question was this, whether their Lordships would consent to do anything by which the national homage of this great people, should hereafter not be exclusively paid to the Christian religion:

The Earl of *Galloway* said, that he partook warmly of the mortification which the right rev. Prelate, the Bishop of London, had expressed at the speech made that night by the right rev. Prelate above him, the Bishop of St. David's.

The Marquess of *Bute* would trouble their Lordships with but few observations. It was utterly impossible that anything could be covert or concealed in this measure. Its object was simply to admit Jews into municipal corporations, and the ar-

guments which had been brought forward were directed against something which was in no degree connected with the bill. The christianity of the State would not, could not, be affected by the bill. The law was at present in a most anomalous condition, the majority of the members of a corporation being able so to carry out the act of Parliament, as even now to admit Jews. This was a state of things which ought not to continue, and the difficulty and anomaly should be at once removed. As a Christian, he considered it his duty to support [the measure, the third reading of which he now begged to move.

Their Lordships divided:—Content 64; Not-content 98: Majority 34.

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Bill thrown out.

PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.] Lord

*Brougham*, in moving the second reading of the Punishment of Death Bill, said, that its object was to abolish the capital punishment for certain offences which had been left punishable with death by a recent act of Parliament, which mitigated the severity of the law in many other cases. Amongst the offences which that act left capital, but which it was now proposed to subject to a milder punishment, were those of embezzling by clerks of the Bank, and other companies, by fabrication of stamps, rape, and one or two other offences. He would not enter into any general arguments on the subject on the present occasion, but would simply mention a fact, which he was sure would be heard with very great satisfaction by their Lordships—namely, that the mitigation of punishments which their Lordships had some years ago sanctioned, had not been attended with any increase to the offences they referred to, but, on the contrary, rather to their diminution. In burglary, robbery, and horse-stealing, the committals within a certain period before the mitigation of the law, either in its letter or practical application, had been 8,774; whilst in the same period, since the application of more lenient punishments, they had been 7,820, being a decrease of 954, or about one ninth of the whole. He believed, moreover, that when it was considered, that there was not now the same repugnance to prosecute as under the more severe law, it would appear, that the amount of actual offences had decreased even in a greater proportion than shown by the number of committals. In the crime of forgery, also, there had been a diminution of offences though not so considerable, perhaps, as in the other offences he had before mentioned. With these few remarks, he begged to move, that this bill be now read a second time.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* would not oppose the second reading of the bill; but if he stood alone, he would in committee oppose the clause which took away the punishment of death for rape with violence. Parliament had no right to pass such a measure, without consulting, if it were possible, the feelings of the female portion of the community.

Bill read a second time.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, June 11, 1841.

*Misurra.*] Bills. Read a first time:—Election Petitions Trial.—Read a second time:—Appropriation; Militia Pay.—Read a third time:—School Sites; Banks of Issue; Dog Carts.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Grote, Mr. Pakenham, General Johnson, Mr. Ward, Sir J. C. Hobhouse, Mr. Villiers, and Lord Elliot, from London, Westminster, Teddington, Oldham, Rotherham, Yorkshire, Ramsgate, Cornwall, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Round, Colonel Rolleston, Viscount Ingestrie, Lord C. Manners, and others, from Emery, Nottinghamshire, Dorsetshire, Staffordshire, Leicestershire, and other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Dr. Lushington, from the Minor Canons of St. Paul's, against certain parts of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners Bill.—By Mr. Pakington, from Nottinghamshire, in favour of Church Extension.

SITES FOR SCHOOLS.—PRIVILEGE AND BUSINESS.] Sir George Grey moved the Order of the Day for the third reading of the School Sites Bill (No. 2.)

Mr. *Freshfield* did not mean to oppose the order of the day, but begged to avail himself of that opportunity of calling the attention of the House to a subject that he deemed of some importance to the general business transacted within these walls. He observed on the paper a notice given by the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Ward), "to move, before the orders of the day, 1. That a Committee of the House of Commons having reported, 'that the hon. Henry Thomas Manners Sutton was, by his agents, guilty of bribery and treating at the election for the borough of Cambridge,' Mr. Attorney-general be directed to prosecute William Swan and Samuel Long, the principal agents of the hon. Henry Thomas Manners Sutton for bribery. 2. That Mr. Attorney-general be also directed to prosecute the hon. Henry Thomas Manners Sutton for bribery at the election for the borough of Cambridge." The hon. Member for Sheffield had, no doubt, given this notice under a supposition, that the matter to which it referred was a matter of privilege. He, however, contended, that it was not a matter of privilege, and, consequently, that it could have no claim whatever to take precedence of the orders of the day. It did not relate to the conduct of any Member of the House, nor was it a matter of such recent occurrence as could in any degree tend to obstruct the functions of the House; therefore it could not be regarded as a matter of such urgent necessity as to entitle it to the precedence which the hon. Member for Sheffield sought to obtain for it. Perhaps Mr. Speaker would favour the House with

his opinion as to whether it could be regarded as matter of privilege or not.

Mr. *Ward* had only one fault to find with the objection of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, and that was, that it was not made at the time that the notice was given. He contended, that this case of the Cambridge election which he now sought to bring forward, was exactly analogous to the case of the St. Alban's election, brought forward and discussed the other evening as a matter of privilege by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. Williams Wynn). There was no pretence for saying that any objection that would be good against the one would not be equally good against the other. In the St. Alban's case, the transaction was a by-gone transaction, quite as much as the transaction in the Cambridge case. He (Mr. Ward), therefore, submitted to the House that the two cases stood in precisely the same position; and if Mr. Speaker should decide upon the question of privilege, that the one was as doubtful as the other was represented to be, he (Mr. Ward) should still put it to the House, whether, in fairness and justice, after the discussion of the other night, he could be denied the opportunity of submitting the motion of which he had given notice.

Mr. *Freshfield* thought, that there was no parallel between the two cases of St. Alban's and Cambridge; the one was a recent, the other a remote transaction.

Sir *E. Sugden* also thought, that there was an essential distinction between the two cases, and that the motion of the hon. Member for Sheffield could claim no precedence as a matter of privilege. He hoped, however, that his hon. Friend would not persist in his objection, but allow the hon. Gentleman the same indulgence as was conceded a few evenings ago to the right hon. Member for Montgomeryshire.

The *Speaker*, having been asked for his opinion as to whether the motion of the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Ward) could come on as a matter of privilege, had no hesitation in declaring, that the subject was in no way a matter of privilege. The hon. Member had given notice that he would move it before the orders of the day. If the House did not interfere to prevent it, there could be no objection to his taking that course; but the hon. Member had no claim to precedence on the ground of privilege. With respect to the motion brought forward the other evening by the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Mont-

gomeryshire (Mr. W. Wynn), if that motion had been objected to, and the question put to him (the Speaker) as to whether it could be brought forward as a matter of privilege, he (the Speaker) should certainly have had great doubt upon the point. He did not think that it could have been brought on strictly as a matter of privilege. It had, however, been the general, though not the uniform custom of the House, to give precedence to matters growing out of election committees.

Mr. *Ward* felt, then, that he must throw himself entirely upon the kindness of the House. He asked whether, in common justice, after the motion of the other night, the House could now refuse him the opportunity of bringing forward the subject of the Cambridge election.

Bill read a third time and passed.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.] Sir *R. Peel* stated, that some time since the committee elections made some suggestions of a trifling and formal nature, for the amendment of some of the provisions of the Act for the trial of Controverted Elections. It would, of course, be matter of great importance that those amendments should be adopted prior to the meeting of a new Parliament. He hoped, therefore, that the House would give him leave to bring in a bill, to amend the act relating to the trial of Controverted Elections.

Leave given.

CAMBRIDGE ELECTION.] Report of Committee on the Cambridge Election, 29th April, 1840, was on the motion of Mr. Ward, read as follows:—

"Sir Charles Lemon further reported, that the committee had agreed to the following resolutions:—

"That it appears to this committee, that the hon. John Henry Thomas Manners Sutton, was, by his agents, guilty of bribery and treating at the last election for the borough of Cambridge,

"That it appears, from the evidence taken before the committee, that an extensive and corrupt system of treating, prevailed on the part of many influential Members of the constituency, at the last election for the borough of Cambridge."

Mr. *Ward* rose, with very great pain and reluctance, to undertake a duty which he should never have dreamed of saddling himself with, but for the new reading of his Parliamentary duties, as a Member of that House which was given to him the other night, by



the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Montgomeryshire. The opinion of that right hon. Gentleman carried great weight with it in all matters relating to the laws, customs, and privileges of the House; and there was no man to whose judgment he (Mr. Ward), would more willingly bow upon all such subjects. How was the law which ought to govern the House, in cases where bribery was alleged against individuals at elections for Members to serve in Parliament, expounded by the right hon. Gentleman the other evening? The right hon. Gentleman said:—

“Even where the evidence of bribery was incomplete, the House would not discharge its duty properly if it did not send the case into a court of justice—that a *prima facie* case was all that the House required—that the House stood in the position of a grand jury in such cases, and that it was its bounden duty to take care that the law did not sleep and become a dead letter. If they did not, all their debating upon bills relating to bribery would be mere idle talk and waste of time.”

On these grounds the right hon. Gentleman moved—

“That the Attorney-general be directed to prosecute Richard Webster, for bribery at the last St. Alban's election.”

The hon. Member for Warwickshire (Mr. Dugdale), in the course of the discussion which took place upon that motion, said:—

“He thought it desirable that special notice should be taken of the present case, particularly before the general election, in order that the borough of St. Alban's might have the opportunity of wiping out the stain that rested upon it.”

St. Alban's did not stand alone in this respect; there were other boroughs to which a similar stain was attached, and it was highly desirable that all these boroughs, as well as the borough of St. Alban's should, have the opportunity of wiping out the stains that were so discreditable to them, before they were again called upon to exercise their elective rights. The hon. Member for Warwickshire, (Mr. Dugdale) said, that

“If Dr. Webster were not guilty of the offence alleged against him, in the report of the election committee, it would in fact be an act of kindness on the part of the House to direct the prosecution, as it would furnish him the opportunity of proving his innocence.”

And the hon. Baronet, the Member for the University of Oxford (Sir R. Inglis), said, that the House, in assenting to the

motion of the right hon. Member for Montgomeryshire (Mr. W. Wynn), did not dream of punishing Dr. Webster, but was merely going to put him on his trial (The resolution), said the hon. Baronet,

“Was not condemnatory of Dr. Webster; but it was intended to send him to trial. And was there, or was there not, sufficient evidence in the Blue Book, to subject him to the ordeal of a tribunal of his country.”

Such were the grounds upon which the motion of the right hon. Member for Montgomeryshire was supported on Tuesday last. Now, St. Alban's, as he had already stated, was not singular in the vice of bribery. Many other boroughs had incurred a similar stain; so many, that the only difficulty when a case was looked for was the difficulty of choice. There was the Evesham case, where Mr. Borthwick was dispossessed of his seat for an act of bribery committed by his own hands; and there were many others to which he might refer, but he preferred to take the most recent case, and therefore had chosen the case of Cambridge. In that case they had many things which were wanting to complete the case of St. Alban's. In the Cambridge case the evidence of the witnesses was sifted, and the accused party had an opportunity of making his defence. None of these things were to be found in the St. Alban's case; and in the Cambridge case they had a one-sided decision; for the noble Lord opposite (Earl Darlington) and an hon. Gentleman, one of the Members for Kent, voted in the majority. The only individual who opposed the resolution of the Cambridge committee was the hon. Baronet, the Member for Radnorshire. It was a case which had been too long overlooked; and, after what had been stated on Monday night, could be overlooked no longer. It was stated, that bribery was greatly on the increase; that it had become a trade, and was conducted with so much dexterity, that it was almost impossible to be proved. In the Cambridge case bribery had been proved to the satisfaction of a Committee of that House, then why not make an example? The right hon. Gentleman, the Member for Montgomeryshire, said, the other night that the situation in life of Dr. Webster greatly aggravated the offence with which he was charged, and that his example as a member of a liberal profession was likely to be doubly pernicious. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gen-

tleman in that sentiment; but in the present instance he thought the right hon. Gentleman would see that he was flying at higher game. In the Cambridge case they had to deal with a Gentleman who had a sort of hereditary claim to a knowledge of the rules and practice of that House. He hoped, therefore, that he should have the honour of the right hon. Gentleman's support on the present occasion, although he found that principle and practice did not always go hand in hand. He thought there could be no better proof of the nature of the bribery that was carried on at Cambridge, than the report of the committee appointed by that House to try the merits of the petition. They reported, that the hon. Henry Manners Sutton was, by his agents, guilty of bribery and treating at the last Cambridge election; and that an extensive and corrupt system of bribery and treating was carried on among many of the influential members of the constituency. These resolutions were carried by majorities of five and six to one of the Members of the committee. It appeared, that the agents of the hon. Candidate were William Swan and Samuel Long, and the latter appeared to be one of those individuals who came within the description of the gallant Member for Donegal (Colonel Conolly); one of those who

"Had learnt to bribe without being discovered, and how to destroy the links of evidence between the briber and the candidate, thus defeating Parliament, frustrating justice, and leaving the delinquency unpunished."

Samuel Long was proved to have been an instrument in the bribing of two electors, the one George Smith, and the other William Marsh. The case of George Smith was to be found towards the close of the report, and it seemed to have been conducted with much cleverness and ingenuity on the part of Mr. Samuel Long. Smith was a shoemaker, and Long went to him and ordered a pair of shoes. On that occasion he gave him some advice as to the duty of a poor man to disregard politics, and to vote as his own interests might require; adding that he could put a few pounds in his pocket if he voted for Mr. Manners Sutton. At a subsequent interview he tried not only advice but wine; he gave wine to the voter, and then told him to cut the matter short about the election, that he would give him 10*l.* for his vote. He could give him 9*l.* then, and he

would receive the remaining pound when he brought home the shoes. He afterwards changed his mind, under an apprehension, perhaps, of the consequences, and told the man not to come himself, but to send his wife for the money. As to bribery, he said it was all nonsense and stuff. "I suppose," said the counsel, "you washed that down with another glass of wine?" to which the witness answered, that he believed there was another glass. The evidence of Smith was confirmed by that of his wife, who stated, that she had received the money, and took it home to her husband. He marked the sovereigns with a file, and afterwards carried them to Mr. Francis Eden, who produced them before the committee. The committee was of opinion, from the evidence adduced, that Long, against whom the charge had been proved, was the agent of Mr. Manners Sutton. He would next come to the case of W. March. The case of March was different from the case of Smith in one respect only. March was a watchmaker, and a different mode of action was adopted. The agent went to March and purchased a brooch, but precisely the same mode of argument was used as had been used in the case of Smith. March was told that a poor man like himself had little to do with the election, that he had best look out for his own interest; he gave him wine, and he (Mr. Ward) supposed, deducting a per centage from the bribe on account of his cleverness in bribing, he gave March nine sovereigns instead of ten. March had a conversation with Cooper on the subject, and when Long accused him of having betrayed March, said, that he had no wish to injure Long, but that he hoped, that those who had employed him would be punished. If they really wished to put an end to this system of corruption, they should not merely prosecute the agents, but the persons from whom the corruption originated. It was sometimes difficult to trace the corruption up to its source, but in the present instance the links in the chain were more than usually complete; so complete, that they traced their agents as canvassing with Mr. Manners Sutton, and as in constant communication with Mr. Manners Sutton's known and recognised agent, as ordering beer for the refreshment of Mr. Manners Sutton's voters, which were all paid for to the amount of 800*l.*, by Mr. Fiske, Mr. Manners Sutton's known and recognised agent.

motion, therefore, was proposed, that he should feel it his duty to oppose it. The Earl of Darlington concurred in the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Baronet. It was needless to say that, whoever might be the individual concerned, — whether of high or low station, whether friend or foe — in any act of delinquency he would give his verdict impartially. He was not present when his right hon. friend brought forward his motion with respect to Dr. Webster, but he certainly was astonished when he found that a number of hon. Gentlemen who profess the greatest horror of bribery had done all in their power to shelter him. He believed a more flagrant case than that had never come before the House of Commons. He would now address himself to the subject before the House. Mr. Long had undoubtedly been guilty of bribery, but he

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Mr. C. Lemmon et al.  
 admitted on the 1st of  
 1881 it was not

have been prosecuted at the time. to Mr. Swan, there had been discussion as to whether it had been proved to have been connected with Mr. Sutton. So far as Mr. Swan's memory served him, it was necessary to show that there was no personal communication between Mr. Swan and Mr. Sutton. There was a difference of opinion as to the subject among the Members of the Committee, and, for his part, he had thought that Mr. Swan's agency had not been proved; but the committee having come to a contrary decision, he afterwards voted that the case of bribery had been made out. He would also add, that though Mr. Swan had been subpoenaed by the counsel for the prosecution, they never brought him, and for no other reason, as appeared to him (Lord Darlington) than that his evidence upon a cross-examination might militate against them. He would leave the House, after a statement of these facts, to judge for itself upon the case of Mr. Swan. He would next come to Mr. Manners Sutton, against whom he thought the hon. Gentleman opposite had not established one single charge. Let him be allowed to add, that so hard did the committee think the case of Mr. Manners Sutton that though he should not retain his seat, so guiltless did they consider him of any kind of bribery, that in the resolution they had passed in the first instance, they had omitted his name altogether. It was only in the second resolution they had come to after the objection of Mr. Austin to the first as illegal and unprecedented, that it had been decided that Mr. Manners Sutton had been guilty of bribery through his agents at the election. Mr. Sutton took no part in the election whatever. He was applied to by the Conservatives to stand for the borough, and he was required to pay 300*l.* towards the expenses of the election. It was the only part Mr. Sutton took in the election, and he did not think a sufficient case had been made out to warrant the House in giving its assent to the motion of the hon. Member for Sheffield.

Mr. *Protheroe* said, it had been distinctly proved before the committee that the agents of Mr. Sutton had contributed to a fund, the avowed object of which was the corruption and bribery of the electors. He believed, however, that, as far as Mr. Sutton was concerned individually, he

stood as clear as any man could who represented one of those old and corrupt constituencies. It certainly appeared to him, that much more blame ought to be attributed to the electors than the candidates, for it was impossible to exercise any influence over the constituencies without falling into the corrupt practices that prevailed in these boroughs; and on those grounds he objected to the prosecution of Mr. Sutton, but he should certainly vote for the first resolution.

Mr. *Thesiger* was of opinion, that it would neither be creditable nor desirable for the House to institute a prosecution with the certain prospect of defeat before it; nor was it at all consistent with the dignity of the House to institute such proceedings in a spirit of retaliation. What he would ask, had the present case to do with the case of Dr. Webster? Were the merits of the present case involved in that? Why not take each case and rest it on its own merits? He repeated, that it was neither expedient nor desirable, to institute the proposed proceedings; it was no light matter for that House to direct a prosecution, as in doing so, the individual about to take his trial would have a prejudice excited against him, inasmuch as it would be assumed that the House had good grounds for sending the case for trial, and the party would, therefore, labour under a prejudice from the commencement. The House should therefore, be careful how it proceeded. He would not refer to the case of St. Alban's. That case had nothing to do with the one then under consideration. It was clear, from the evidence of the Chairman of the committee, which sat upon the Cambridge petition, that nothing was elicited which could implicate Mr. Manners Sutton, and the hon. Member for Halifax bore testimony to the same effect. Neither did there appear in the evidence anything which could implicate Swan. He regretted, that the hon. and learned Attorney-general was not present, as he should have wished to appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman, whether in the administration of criminal justice any person was held responsible for the conduct of his agent, unless that person were himself in some degree personally connected with the act. In civil cases, the principal was responsible for the conduct of the agent, but, with the exception already made, such was not the case in the administration of criminal

justice. If he was right in this opinion, the consequence of a prosecution being directed by the House would be, that those who administered the criminal laws in our courts of justice, seeing not the slightest pretence for a prosecution, would direct an acquittal, and then the House would suffer in the eyes of the country for having, at the same time that several of its Members were members of the legal profession also, not only sanctioned, but directed a prosecution which it would be impossible to maintain. He would appeal, therefore, to the good sense of the House, and ask whether it would be right to institute a prosecution, when there was no evidence whatsoever to connect Mr. Manners Sutton with Swan, whilst at the same time no act of bribery could be proved against Swan. With respect to Long, he was not prepared to defend him. There was no doubt, that a case of personal bribery had been made out against Long, for which he was liable to a prosecution. The House, however, did not seem to be aware that a prosecution had already been commenced against Long. It was instituted in January, 1840, at the borough sessions of Cambridge. He was taken on a warrant issued by Professor Henslow, who was an ardent friend and partizan of Mr. Gibson, and who proposed that gentleman as a candidate. The case was heard in the first instance before four magistrates, who were also partizans of Mr. Gibson, and at certain portions of the evidence which appeared to make against Long, one of the magistrates expressed applause. Long was held to bail by those magistrates, himself in 500*l.*, and two sureties of 250*l.* each, though he was only a poor harness-maker earning 3*l.* a-week. The case was moved by *certiorari* to the Court of Queen's Bench, and was ripe for trial, which was to come on at the spring assizes of 1840. The attorneys for the prosecution, who were also the agents for the petitioners against Mr. Manners Sutton, came to town, and met Long by appointment at the Craven Hotel, or some hotel in Craven-street, where he was told, that the prosecution against him would be foregone if he would give evidence against Mr. Manners Sutton. This person made a statement that he was present at, he (Mr. Thesiger) thought, the Eagle, when one Mitchell, in the presence of Mr. Fisher, a leading Conservative in Cambridge, handed over to him forty sove-

reigns, for the purposes of bribery. When, however, he came before the committee of the House of Commons, this man, on his oath, positively denied that that statement was true, and declared that he had only made it for the purpose of getting an abandonment of the prosecution. Certainly he (Mr. Thesiger) was not there to defend such a person as this, but he submitted that it was more likely that the truth should come out when the man was before the committee, than when he was making a statement to the opposing party. He wished to ask the Attorney-general whether he ever had known an instance in which an *ex officio* information against a party had been filed when an indictment for the same offence was already depending. He could not think, that the Attorney-general could be induced to enter upon such a prosecution, and for the reasons he had given, he trusted the House would negative all the resolutions.

The *Attorney-General* was rather surprised, considering the situation in which he was placed, that his hon. and learned Friend should have appealed to him on this occasion. Having in the case of the St. Alban's election, which was before the House very recently, declined giving any opinion on its merits, it was his intention to pursue the same course on the present occasion. If he were to depart from that line, it was possible it might be quoted against him, before a jury, that he was prosecuting a case on which he had already delivered an opinion as a judge in the House of Commons.

Sir E. Sugden was of opinion, that there was no ground whatever for instituting a prosecution against Mr. Manners Sutton. That Gentleman's name was most reluctantly introduced into the report of the committee, it being the opinion of that committee, that Mr. Sutton was in no way proved to be cognizant of the acts of bribery alleged to have been committed in his name, and it was only on the representation of Mr. Austen, the petitioner's counsel, who stated that he feared the finding of the committee would be inoperative unless that gentleman's name was mentioned, that the committee introduced the name of Mr. Sutton at all. There was nothing to implicate that Gentleman, and if he should be indicted he must be acquitted: he would, therefore, suggest to the hon. Member for Sheffield to withdraw the resolution against Mr. Sutton.

Mr. *Ward* said, that after the discussion which had taken place, he was perfectly willing to abandon the resolution against Mr. *Manners Sutton*, who, although he might be morally guilty, was not, he was inclined to think, after the opinions which had been expressed, legally guilty of bribery.

Lord *J. Russell* felt himself relieved from the necessity of considering the question in respect to the charge against Mr. *Manners Sutton* by the course which the hon. Member for *Sheffield* had just taken. In the second resolution he (Lord *John Russell*) could not have concurred, because he did not see anything in the evidence which at all implicated Mr. *Manners Sutton*. With regard to the first resolution, he thought it desirable, that it should be divided into two resolutions, because it related to two different cases. With respect to Mr. *Swan*, he (Lord *John Russell*) should certainly require more evidence than he had yet obtained, before he could assent to a prosecution on the part of the House against him; but with respect to *Long*, it was admitted generally, by both sides of the House, as far as the opinion of the House was concerned, that he had been guilty personally of several acts of bribery, and that it was just such a case in which the House might properly interfere.

Mr. *Williams Wynn* would be sorry to see the idea of instituting a prosecution for bribery entertained where the act was done by agency only, without any proof of knowledge on the part of the principal, because such a course would interfere with the conduct of election committees, and deter them from doing that with respect to the seat of the sitting Member which they could legally do, although there might be no ground for a prosecution. He therefore acquiesced in the withdrawal of the resolution as far as respected Mr. *Manners Sutton*.

Mr. *T. Hobhouse* hoped, as it appeared that hon. Gentlemen on both sides were agreed as to the substance of the resolution, at least against *Long*, that his hon. Friend, the Member for *Sheffield*, would put it into that technical shape which would make it agree with the wishes of the House.

Mr. *Plumptre* had no objection to continue the prosecution against *Long*, but he did not think a case had been made out against *Swan*.

Mr. *Ward* said, that the finding of the committee was, that the agency of *William Swan, jun.*, was proved, and that they considered *Long* to be the instrument of *Swan*, for the purpose of this election. Now, as the committee regarded *Long* to be the instrument of *Swan*, for the purpose of bribery, *Swan* certainly ought to be considered as one link in the chain of agency. He had no objection to divide the resolution into two parts, making the first a direction to the Attorney-general to proceed against *Long*, and the next a direction to the Attorney-general to proceed against *Swan*, but he could not withdraw the resolution against *Swan*, because he thought him to be one of the instruments in the work of bribery. Mr. *Ward* concluded by moving,

"That a committee of the House of Commons having reported, that the hon. Henry Thomas *Manners Sutton* was, by his agents, guilty of bribery and treating at the election for the borough of Cambridge. Mr. Attorney-general be directed to prosecute *Samuel Long*, a principal agent of the hon. Henry Thomas *Manners Sutton*, for bribery."

Agreed to.

The hon. Member then moved,

"That a committee of the House of Commons having reported 'That the hon. Henry Thomas *Manners Sutton* was, by his agents, guilty of bribery and treating at the election for the borough of Cambridge,' Mr. Attorney-general be directed to prosecute *William Swan*, a principal agent of the hon. Henry Thomas *Manners Sutton*, for bribery."

The House divided: Ayes 78; Noes 46: Majority 32.

#### List of the AYES.

Adam, Admiral	Hawes, B.
Armstrong, A.	Hawkins, J. H.
Bainbridge, E. T.	Heathcoat, J.
Baines, E.	Hector, C. J.
Barnard, E. G.	Hume, J.
Bernal, R.	Humphery, J.
Bramston, T. W.	Hutt, W.
Bridgeman, H.	Hutton, R.
Brodie, W. B.	Langdale, hon. C.
Brotherton, J.	Leader, J. T.
Busfeild, W.	Maule, hon. F.
Clay, W.	Morris, D.
Collier, J.	Muntz, G. F.
Collins, W.	Muskett, G. A.
Cowper, hon. W. F.	O'Brien, C.
Currie, R.	O'Connell, M. J.
Dalmeny, Lord	O'Ferrall, R. M.
Duncombe, T.	Parker, J.
Evans, W.	Parnell, rt. hn. Sir H.
Ferguson, Colonel	Pattison, J.
Goddard, A.	Pechell, Captain

Phillipotts, J.  
Power, J.  
Price, Sir R.  
Protheroe, E.  
Pryse, P.  
Ramsbottom, J.  
Rice, E. R.  
Richards, R.  
Rundle, J.  
Salwey, Colonel  
Scholefield, J.  
Seale, Sir J. H.  
Sheil, right hon. R. L.  
Smith, J. A.  
Smith, B.  
Smith, R. V.  
Somers, J. P.  
Stansfield, W. R. C.  
Staunton, Sir G. T.  
Stuart, Lord J.

Strutt, E.  
Style, Sir C.  
Surrey, Earl of  
Thorneley, T.  
Troubridge, Sir E. T.  
Tuffnell, H.  
Turner, E.  
Villiers, hon. C. P.  
Wakley, T.  
Walker, R.  
Wemyss, Captain  
Williams, W.  
Wood, G. W.  
Wood, B.  
Wyse, T.  
Yates, J. A.

## TELLERS.

Ward, W.  
Hobhouse, T.

*List of the NOES.*

Arbuthnott, hon. H.  
Baring, rt. hon. F. T.  
Baring, hon. W. B.  
Blackstone, W. S.  
Bolling, W.  
Buck, L. W.  
Burr, H.  
Burrell, Sir C.  
Douglas, Sir C. E.  
Drummond, H. H.  
Du Pre, G.  
Eatoh, R. J.  
Fellowes, E.  
Gladstone, J. N.  
Grimsditch, T.  
Hale, R. B.  
Hayes, Sir E.  
Henniker, Lord  
Hodgson, R.  
Holmes, W.  
Ingestre, Viscount  
Jackson, Mr. Serjeant  
Jones, J.  
Knight, H. G.  
Labouchere, rt. hn. H.

Lefroy, right hon. T.  
Mackenzie, T.  
Morpeth, Viscount  
Neeld, J.  
Nicholl, J.  
Pakington, J. S.  
Parker, M.  
Pigot, R.  
Plumptre, J. P.  
Price, R.  
Pringle, A.  
Rae, right hon. Sir W.  
Rushbrooke, Colonel  
Russell, Lord J.  
Sanderson, R.  
Seymour, Lord  
Somerset, Lord G.  
Thesiger, F.  
Thornhill, G.  
Verner, Colonel  
Wood, Colonel T.

## TELLERS.

Darlington, Earl of  
Walsh, Sir J.

Resolution agreed to.

**BRIBERY AT ELECTIONS.]** Lord John Russell (on the further consideration of the report on the Bribery at Elections Bill) observed, that as it had been supposed, that he had proceeded with the bill yesterday, after the right hon. Member for Tamworth had retired from the House, he had taken pains to-day to ascertain whether the right hon. Baronet had any objection to the measure as it stood, and had good ground for believing that the right hon. Baronet approved of it in its present shape.

Bill to be engrossed.

**DEBTS OF PARISHES.]** On the Order of the Day for resuming the debate on the Debts of Parishes Bill in committee having been read,

Mr. B. Wood expressed a hope, that the bill would be postponed till next Session. Parliament ought to be in possession of more information than it at present possessed on the subject, before it proceeded to legislate with reference to it, and there would be no difficulty in obtaining that information before the next Session. He (Mr. Wood) intended to move for a return of those debts, with a classification, which return would afford very valuable information to the House on the subject of the bill, and there would be no difficulty in obtaining the return in the recess.

Mr. Rice hoped, that the bill would be postponed till next Session.

Mr. Wakley also expressed his opinion that the House ought to have more information before they proceeded to legislate on the subject.

Mr. Plumptre said, that in consequence of what had fallen from the hon. Gentlemen opposite, he would not then press the bill.

Debate further adjourned.

**REGISTRY OF ELECTORS.]** Mr. T. Duncombe moved for leave to bring in a bill more effectually to enforce the printing, and the speedy delivery, at a reasonable price, of copies of the registry of electors in England and Wales; and to make provision for the printing of the registry of the present year of the electors of the county of Hertford.

The motion agreed to.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, June 12, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a first time.—*Register of Voters.*

—Read a third time.—*Bribery at Elections; Metropolitan Improvements (No. 2); County Bridges (No. 2).*

Petitions presented. By Mr. Briscoe, from Thro'wood, and Nutclough, by Mr. T. Duncombe, from Finchley, and other parts of the Metropolis, by Mr. Ewart, from various parts of the Metropolis, and by the Solicitor-general, from Bolton, in favour of the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Solicitor-general, from Southampton of London, for the Abolition of the Toll on Southwark, Waterloo, and Vauxhall Bridges.—By Mr. Smythe, from Canterbury, against the proposed Alteration in the Corn-laws.—By Sir R. H. Inglis, from Whitton, and Ashbyrough (Lincolnshire), praying for Church Extension.—By Mr. Chapman, from Greenock, Liverpool, and other places, against the proposed Abolition of the Timber Duties.

APPROPRIATION—BUSINESS OF THE SESSION.] On the motion that the Appropriation Bill be committed,

Sir G. Sinclair said, that he, of course, should not offer the slightest objection to the progress of this bill, but he could not help observing that, within the memory of man, no Session had ever occurred at the close of which the people received so small a return, in the shape of useful and practical legislation, for so enormous a sum of money as it was now proposed to appropriate for the public service. He had of late been paying considerable attention to the somewhat mournful subject of Parliamentary necrology; and he observed every day with sorrow, but without surprise, that so many measures of great interest and value took their places in the diurnal obituary, and were included in the bills of mortality. The reams of paper wasted in printing during this Session would suffice to supply all the trunk-makers and tallow-chandlers in the metropolis with materials for the next six months. He did not by any means intend to cast exclusive blame upon the Government for this inauspicious and unsatisfactory result. All parties were equally in fault for having not only tolerated, but he would even say, encouraged, the pernicious and preposterous practice of adjourning debates—a practice which, if not put an end to by common consent, must inevitably bring on a national bankruptcy, as far as the public time was concerned, and leave very inadequate dividends to be appropriated for the diversified exigencies of legislation. The evil had been greatly aggravated during the course of this Session; “and, Sir,” (said the hon. Baronet), “I may without impropriety, utter a complaint on this subject, as I have taken no part in any of these wearisome discussions to which I allude, and by which the public out of doors (I speak of all classes and of all parties) has been both exasperated and disgusted. Many persons are inclining to the opinion, that 658 honest operatives, who spoke less, and did more, would carry on public business with far greater advantage and satisfaction to the empire. The two debates on the sugar duties and the no-confidence question almost engrossed the space of a honeymoon—the one having begun during the first week in May, and the other having terminated during the first week in June; and if at the commencement of the former I had set out for

Caithness, I might have passed one or two days at my own house in that remote district, and then returned to London, without any inconvenience, in ample time for the division. Another reason why the whole Session has been nearly thrown away (so far as measures are concerned), and why so many bills have been relinquished, is, that the leaders on both sides (of whom I wish to speak with all respect) so seldom condescend to address the House at a reasonable hour. They seem to be, if I may so express myself, *avidus nimis auricularum*, and are unable or unwilling to speak with empty stomachs or to empty benches; but if they would only, like the Horatii and Curiatii, stand forward at once as the accredited champions of their respective parties, the House would not be deserted at seven o'clock, as it now invariably is, and their respective adherents would, I believe, in general, be quite satisfied to leave the discussion entirely in their hands.” The hon. Baronet then went on to say—“The accomplished debaters who occupy the front benches are but little aware of the *sotto voce* chorus of murmurs which their orations, however able, excite among the exhausted malcontents who ‘sit with sad civility’ behind them. I may perhaps be allowed to put a hypothetical case, and to suppose that the Roman Senate had been so absurd and unwise as to devote the night to legislation. When the younger Members strutted in at a late hour, gorged with crude peacocks and hot with the Tuscan grape, I have no doubt that before they had long resumed their seats such objurgatory expressions of uneasiness would be gently interchanged as these—‘Surely, Hortensius is particularly heavy to night.’ ‘Don’t you think Lucullus is intolerably long-winded?’ ‘Ah, Cæsar, I wish to Morpheus you would hold your tongue and sit down; what you say is all very true, my fine fellow, but there is a time for all things, and we have heard these arguments at least a dozen times already.’ And it must not be supposed that these comments would have at all been dictated by party spleen. Drowsiness, like death, levels all distinctions; and if the leader of the Movement party at Rome had addressed the House after midnight, before he had half concluded his speech, the great majority of his adherents would have begun to mutter between their teeth—



"Quosque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientiâ nostrâ?"

and, although Brutus was an eloquent as well as an 'honourable man,' the sternest Republican would have ejaculated '*et tu, Brute!*' if he had risen to reply at half-past three o'clock in the morning. Nay, he could even suppose the case of some plain, lackadaisical country senator, summoned from the plough, like Cincinnatus (not, however, to save the country by his sword, but to aid a party by his suffrage), sauntering about sunrise in the lobby, lengthways and breadthways alternately, with his hands crossed behind his back, whistling for want of thought, and exclaiming almost every five minutes to the door-keeper, in a semi-plaintive, semi-querulous tone, and with a face full of disconsolate impatience, 'Is Cicero still up!' The inconvenience, or rather torment, to which Members are subjected by the present regulations and practices is very imperfectly remedied by the expedient of pairing-off—a boon which is always most peremptorily denied to those who most stand in need of it. The later the hour, and the nearer the division, the more each of the masters of the ceremonies on either side becomes—

"Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;"

and veterans who have hobbled down upon crutches, or valetudinarians who have been carried up in litters, ought, like a soldier when enduring corporal punishment, to have a doctor standing by to feel their pulses, and ascertain whether their lives may not be endangered by being compelled to sit up for another hour. I shall now very briefly state the only alternative of remedies which has occurred to me, and for which I think I almost deserve a medal from the Humane Society. I admit that our constituents are entitled to expect that we shall look after their interests, and attend to the business of the country, until a reasonable hour, but no longer. Now, supposing eleven o'clock to be, as I think it is, the period at which we should be released from the fatigue and turmoil of legislation, I propose that the officers of the House should at that time take their stations in the lobby, with the printed lists in their hands, and that all Members who have made up their minds how they shall vote should have their names marked, and be considered as included in the di-

vision, as if they had needlessly and reluctantly remained for three or four hours longer, and gone through the ceremony of being successively tapped on the shoulder by the tellers. I cannot, I confess, see any very powerful objections to this plan. The curious, in long speeches, or the conscientious scruplemongers, if any such there be, with whom the debate has any influence in determining how they shall give their suffrages, might remain until the end; the orators might proceed without an ungracious accompaniment of yells and yawnings, and the only other consequence would be, a diminished consumption of stamped covers in the library, of sodawater in the lobby, and of cigars in the smoking-room. The second mode of obviating this great inconvenience would be by a regulation, that the debate should terminate at night, but the division not to take place until the House met again; when the question might at once be put from the Chair, and decided without any further discussion—an arrangement which would enable the Members who had remained until the end, to weigh more maturely the arguments to which they had listened, whilst those who had been unable to sit up until the close, might have the benefit of reading in the public prints, before giving their votes, the harangues which they had not had the good fortune to hear, or I should perhaps say, in a great majority of cases, the good fortune not to hear. I therefore venture to throw out these suggestions for the consideration of the future Parliament, and would say to every Gentleman now present—

"——— Si quid novisti rectius istis  
Candidus imperti; si non his utere mecum."

House in Committee.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the usual clause of appropriation which was agreed to.

House resumed; Report to be received.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS] Sir G. Clerk moved the second reading of the Controverted Elections Trial Amendment Bill.

Mr. V. Smith said, he would not object to the motion, though there were many parts of the bill which he should much like to see changed. He was the less disposed to object to it, because he looked upon it as an experiment which would be tried in the first Session of a

new Parliament. He however, must take the opportunity of saying, that no trial of a controverted election could ever be satisfactorily tried, until the jurisdiction was removed altogether from the House.

Sir *G. Clerk* said, that the observations of the hon. Gentleman did not apply to the immediate question before the House. It would be impossible at the present period of the Session, to discuss the general subject to which the hon. Member had referred. The object of the present bill was merely to introduce some alterations in the existing law, particularly as regarded the Committee of Selection. It was desirable, that the bill should be made as complete as possible, and the provisions now proposed to be introduced in it were merely intended to remove certain difficulties which had occurred. One of the alterations proposed, was to make the attendance of the Chairman of the committee compulsory. He agreed entirely with the hon. Gentleman who recommended that change. Some such enactment was necessary, for it would be impossible to secure their attendance without it. Another alteration was for the purpose of removing difficulties which had occurred with regard to the serving of notices. Another difficulty had arisen as to cases where more than one petition had been presented against a return. It was proposed to consider all such as one petition, and refer them to the Committee of Selection. His right hon. Friend proposed to re-enact the whole of the former bill, and the alterations proposed to be introduced would be printed in italics, so that hon. Members could see at a glance the alterations intended.

Mr. *Ord* did not think the law had totally failed; on the contrary, he thought it a great improvement on the old law. He objected to giving to any tribunal out of the House the power of trying election petitions.

Viscount *Mahon* would not oppose the bill, though he still adhered to the opinion he had already expressed—that neither the present nor any other measure for the trial of election petitions would be successful which left the jurisdiction in that House in all such cases. The House was now so divided by party, and hostile political collision between those parties so frequent, that he considered the House quite incompetent to give that calm and impartial consideration to election ques-

tions which they required, and which, in his opinion, could be expected only from the high judicial authority of the land. In saying this, he meant to cast no imputation on any Member or body of Members, and he considered his observations applied to himself with the same force that they did to any other Member.

Mr. *C. Buller* thought the bill had introduced a great deal of practical good, and he considered it still more valuable as a step to further improvement. He thought the plan of the right hon. Baronet had had the effect of increasing the intelligence of election committees. He thought the mode of selecting the Chairman a great improvement, and he thought it desirable to have as permanent a Chairman as possible. The question whether such Chairman should be of the House or out of the House, was a very grave one, and required much consideration. He was not prepared to go to the extent of making the service of the Chairman compulsory. No set of men would be harder worked than they would be during the next Session, and it would be a monstrous injustice to the Chairman, and doubling the difficulties of the Committee of Selection. He therefore, hoped, that no such clause would be proposed.

Mr. *Pryme* did not think this a very valuable measure, but he must admit, that it had not yet had a fair trial. One thing he thought deserved notice. He thought the Committee of Selection exercised too little care and caution in seeing that the persons chosen as chairmen of committees had no local connection of any sort with the matter which the committee had to try. Want of sufficient caution in that respect tended to bring back one of the great evils of the old system which it was intended to get rid of. He did not mean to impute any intentional partiality in the selection of chairmen of election committees. What he wanted to impress on the House was the necessity of due caution in such choice.

Lord *Eliot* said, that no Member was ever chosen Chairman who was known to be in any way locally connected, however remotely, with the county, city, or borough, the return for which he had to try. One thing he thought would be an improvement in the selection of committees. It was, that they should be reduced from seven Members to five. The responsibility would be greater in the case of

each Member, and greater attention would be paid. This was the opinion of many eminent counsel who were in the habit of practising before election committees.

Bill read a second time.

**HIGHWAY-RATES.]** On the question that the report of the Highway Rates Bill be brought up,

Captain *Peckell* opposed the motion. He objected to the bill on principle. It went to give the justices a power to appropriate highway rates to private property. He felt persuaded, that the House was not aware of the great power it gave to the county magistrates. He should, therefore, move, that the report on the bill be brought up that day three months.

Mr. *Goring* said, that the bill, instead of injuring the public, was calculated, in a very great degree, to guard against expense being incurred by parishes, inasmuch as by its operation the roads were prevented being in such a situation as that an indictment would lie. It was, he thought, of material importance, that the bill should be continued.

Sir *C. Burrell*, said the bill was approved of by the Government—and it was in the opinion of many persons absolutely necessary, to enable the trustees of roads to maintain them. It was no violation of principle, for under the old law, statute labour had been applied to the repair of turnpike roads.

Lord *Eliot* suggested, that as there were not then Members enough to make a House, the hon. Member should not press his amendment to a division, as it would delay the progress of other bills to which no objections existed.

Captain *Peckell* would not object to the adjournment of the debate, but would not withdraw his opposition to the bill.

Amendment withdrawn, and debate adjourned; House adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, June 14, 1841.

**MINUTES.]** Bills. Read a first time:—Metropolis Improvements; Expenses; Bribery at Elections; County Bridges (No. 3).—Read a second time:—Houses of Industry (Ireland); Insolvent Debtors (Ireland); Western Australia; New South Wales; Dublin Wide Streets; School Sites (No. 2); Loan Societies Acts Continuance; Banks of Issue.—Read a third time:—Tithe Compositions (Ireland); Administration of Justice Act Amendment; Bills of Exchange Acts Continuance; Loan Societies Acts Continuance.

Petitions presented. By Lord Lyndhurst, from *Lancashire*,

against the proposed Financial Measures.—By the Marquess of Ailes, from *Ayr*, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Duke of Argyll, from various places, against Church Patronage

**CORN-LAWS.]** Lord *Wharnccliffe* wished to know whether the noble Earl opposite intended to bring forward his motion on the subject of the Corn-laws to-morrow?

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, that he would not bring on the motion to-morrow. The only other day on which he could introduce it was Friday, but as he understood, that the noble Duke who usually sat at the head of the benches opposite would not be in the House on that day, he was afraid, that he would not be able to bring the question forward in a substantive form during the present Session. The noble Earl presented a petition from Liverpool, complaining of the general depression of trade, and approving of the financial measures, with reference to corn, sugar, and timber, proposed by her Majesty's Ministers. The noble Earl also presented several petitions from places in Yorkshire, for a repeal of the Corn-laws.

Earl *Stanhope* inquired whether the Liverpool petitioners attributed the distressed state of trade to the operation of the Corn-laws, or to the alteration of the currency?

Earl *Fitzwilliam* said, if his noble Friend would read the petition he would see, that the petitioners approved of the proposition of Ministers to remove the sliding scale, and to have recourse to a fixed duty, because the existing system, by restricting our commerce with foreign countries, tended, together with other restrictive measures, to produce the evils of which they complained. Three-fourths of the persons engaged in the iron trade had signed the petition. The iron trade was unquestionably in a state of great depression. A remarkable circumstance had lately occurred (of which each of their Lordships as were interested in the subject must be aware), which proved this to be the fact. So much was the iron trade depressed, that in the counties of Stafford and Salop not less than fifty furnaces had been put out of blast. If some steps were not taken to remedy this state of things, a permanent injury to the amount of several millions annually would be inflicted on the manufactures of this country.

Lord *Ashburton* doubted not, that severe distress prevailed in the iron trade at the present time. He took it for granted

that it was so. This exemplified the manner in which distress occasionally came upon manufactured articles, but that distress was wholly foreign to the Corn-laws. As regarded the iron trade he had to observe, that if any one branch of industry had been carried to greater lengths than another, it was the iron trade. It had, however, been in a most prosperous condition, for he had heard of cases in which persons had realised fortunes of 50,000*l.*, 60,000*l.*, and 80,000*l.* a year out of that trade. There might be, and doubtless were, checks in the trade, but that was no justification for attacking other branches of industry. It would not, however, be pretended, that the iron trade was depressed by foreign competition, for it did so happen, that no part of the world could compete with this country in the manufacture of iron. If the noble Earl stated, that the iron trade was labouring under depression on account of the Corn-laws, he must tell the noble Earl, that he was labouring under a delusion.

Earl Fitzwilliam had never stated, that the iron trade was particularly affected by the Corn-laws, nor had the petitioners themselves asserted any such thing. What they said was, that the distressed state of general trade (of which the iron trade formed a part) might be traced in a considerable degree to the operation of the Corn-laws. They, as a part and portion of the great commercial interests of the country, complained that those interests at large were injured by our restrictive commercial policy, and they referred to their own case as a proof that their proposition was well founded.

Lord Hatherton presented a petition from West Bromwich, signed by 5,017 persons, for the repeal of the Corn-laws. He did not mean to enter into a discussion of those laws, but would read the concluding paragraphs of the petition. The petitioners deplored the frightful depreciation in the value of manufactures, without any corresponding reduction in the price of provisions. They complained, that though employment was scarce, the provision market was as high as when labour was abundant; and further, that while food was rendered excessively high in price, the existing system, by closing foreign markets against our manufactures, made labour extremely cheap.

Petition laid on the Table.

SUNDAY TRAFFIC.] Lord Hatherton said, that he was desired by the committee appointed by their Lordships to inquire into the subject of trafficking on railways and canals on Sundays, to present to the House the report which they had caused to be drawn up. The committee had received a great deal of evidence on the subject. They had examined parties connected with all the different lines of communication between the Thames and the Mersey. They had examined the owners, servants, and many of the carriers on those lines, and they had only abstained from entering into an examination of the boatmen as a class, because their numerous petitions to that and the other House of Parliament sufficiently indicated their opinions on the subject. The committee were unanimously of opinion, that the evidence taken presented the strongest possible case for legislative interference. The social and moral interests of the country required either, that some prohibitory law should be enacted, or that power should be given to companies to exercise a discretion as to certain hours during which Sunday travelling on those lines of communication should be stopped. If the Government did not take up the subject he would himself early next Session present a bill to their Lordships for the purpose of investing companies with permissive powers.

The Marquess of Normanby bore testimony to the unanimity of opinion which prevailed on this subject in the committee, and expressed a hope, that next Session their views might be carried into effect.

Report laid on the Table.

PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.] On the Motion of the Marquess of Normanby, the House resolved itself into Committee on the Punishment of Death Abolition Bill.

On the second clause,

Lord Wynford moved, that the offence of destroying or attempting to destroy sacred edifices, should be excepted from the operation of the bill.

Amendment negatived.

On the third clause,

The Marquess of Westmeath expressed his objection to that part which removed the crime of rape from the list of capital offences. If their Lordships should agree to that proposition, as respected England, which it appeared to him would be an act

of madness, he conjured them to pause before they extended the bill to Ireland. He found from authentic returns, that the number of assaults upon females, with intent to commit a capital offence, which occurred in 1840, in England, with a population of fourteen millions, was 169; whilst in Ireland it was 173, with a population of only eight millions. [Lord *Brougham*: 173 cases of rape?] Of rape, and assaults with intent to commit a rape. [Lord *Brougham*: That made a considerable distinction.] He repeated, that there were in Ireland, in the year 1840, 173 cases, out of a population of eight millions. As he had before said, he trusted their Lordships would not sanction the extension of the clause under consideration to Ireland.

The Earl of *Mountcashell* protested against such a clause as the present, as it went to break down all those barriers which had hitherto remained sacred as a protection to defenceless woman.

The Marquess of *Normanby* observed, that if it had before been necessary that his noble Friend and he should have assured their Lordships, that they had not given their support to the alteration of the criminal law in this respect from their want of abhorrence of the crime it attempted to repress, it became now even more necessary to give them that assurance. Indeed, he would add, that it was the abhorrence with which his noble Friend and he regarded this atrocious crime which had induced them to support this clause, as the way to render the punishment both certain, and likely to prove effective in the repression of the crime. He hoped that the alteration would have the effect of inducing jurors not to seek hereafter for ingenious reasons to disbelieve the evidence of unhappy females who had been thus abused, as had too frequently been the case of late years upon trials of this nature. It would also prevent, by inducing convictions in cases clearly made out by the evidence of the female injured, that which had been but too frequent, the infliction of a stain upon the character and veracity of the poor sufferer—a stain which was almost inseparable from the rejection of her evidence by the jury, and the acquittal of the party arraigned. For these reasons he trusted their Lordships would reject the amendment.

Lord *Abinger* admitted, that our criminal code had with great justice been stig-

matized by the civilised world as too sanguine. Still he conceived the bill, or at least this clause of it, went rather too far, and he could have wished, for his part, from all he had been enabled to gather upon the subject, that the punishment of death for aggravated offences of this kind should be retained. It had certainly been found, upon reference to the returns of convictions for this offence during the last ten years, that the sympathies of the neighbourhood where the offence had been perpetrated were but too generally excited in favour of sparing the life of the party, and this very materially militated against the due administration of the law as it stood, for the consequences were, that the Home-office was besieged by applications in *favorem vitæ*, and thus it happened, that the law imposed upon a judge the invidious duty of pronouncing the sentence of death upon criminals of this kind, which was scarcely ever executed. He would with deference ask their Lordships, what was the use of a capital punishment for a particular offence remaining on their statute book which was rarely ever suffered to be inflicted on the culprit? He confessed his objection went no further than this, that the capital punishment should not be altogether abolished, but should be reserved for aggravated and atrocious cases. If they adopted this course, they would not hereafter find jurors so anxious to seize upon every trifling pretext or formal legal nicety, in order to destroy the evidence of the woman, and save the culprit from a sentence of death—a sentence which always enlisted the sympathy of the jurors to a great extent. He should have been glad if any noble Lord had introduced a clause making an act of this kind, committed by several men upon a female, a capital felony against all the offenders, but as this had not been attempted, he confessed he was not prepared to move such a clause, and he should therefore support the clause as it stood.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* said, he could not support the clause. He believed, that the punishment of death for cases of violent assault and forcible rape was indispensable for the protection of virtuous females, for he was fully convinced, that nothing short of the positive dread of an ignominious death could restrain those fierce passions which the most charitable in society admitted sunk the offender lower than the brute. Entertaining the

strongest objections to the principle embodied in the clause, he should, therefore, move the third clause be omitted.

Lord *Brougham* admitted the subject under consideration was one of the utmost importance to the morals of society. Within the last four or five years there were about a hundred prosecutions for this offence, but only twelve convictions. The jurors could not be prevailed upon for any consideration to be made parties to what must turn out to be the destruction of human life, where there was the possibility or a doubt in their minds that guilt did not really exist. He must remind their Lordships of the great peculiarity of this offence. A very learned judge had said, with reference to this offence, that the accusation was very easily made, but most difficult to refute. It was not simply a question whether the prisoner should be convicted or not, but it was a question as to whether the prisoner should be convicted or the witness discredited. The consequence of this consideration was, that the juror always felt more or less a doubt hanging over the testimony given, and hence the difficulty under the existing law of procuring convictions where guilt did really exist. The juror would say, he would not send the prisoner to be executed upon evidence which he was not willing to believe. He recollected an extraordinary case which had occurred not very long ago, of apparently the most aggravated nature. The prosecutrix was called and examined at great length, the case appeared to be perfectly plain, and the feeling with which the judge and the jury were influenced was, that it was a case of extra-personal violence, and one of the most aggravated nature. The evidence that was adduced on the occasion went to show, that the prosecutrix had been knocked down upon the ground with the most brutal violence. The prisoner denied the charge altogether, but the charge against him appeared to be so clearly proved, that the jurors overcame their usual scruples and brought in a verdict of guilty. Notwithstanding this result, it soon afterwards appeared there was every reason to believe, that this verdict was an erroneous one. Notwithstanding all appearances were against the unfortunate prisoner, it speedily turned out that the prosecutrix should not have been believed. His noble Friend at the head of the Home Department immediately or-

dered a commutation, or a postponement of the sentence (he did not recollect which), but at all events time was given for further inquiry into the matter, the result of which was, that the most satisfactory evidence was produced to show, that the commutation and postponement of the sentence was right, and the verdict of the jury was wrong. The evidence was no less than the complete confession of the prosecutrix herself. The bare existence of such a case, from his knowledge of the law in this country, will make it for years and years to come, impossible to procure, in that part of the country, a conviction for this offence. It was for the purpose of making the law effective, and to prevent the recurrence of such cases as that he had just stated, that he wished to see the law in this respect changed. He wished it were possible to frame the law so as to retain capital punishment for particular cases of an aggravated nature, and in which the offence had been proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, and to abolish capital punishment in those of a general description. This House was certainly not bound to pay that deference to the other House of Parliament, by passing this bill, because the other House had agreed to it, but, upon a question of this peculiar description, he thought they were bound to look at what was passing in the House of Commons, which had so many divisions of late, and which had latterly been muttering rather than pronouncing its decisions upon so many important questions of policy. But upon a question like this before their Lordships, when they saw the other House, notwithstanding their conduct on other subjects, coming forward with the majority of two or three to one in favour of this clause, he thought their Lordships should agree to it. He would venture to say that, practically speaking, if the law stands where it does, it is changed in its administration, and should now be altered in its letter. He would, therefore, earnestly hope that their Lordships would affirm the clause.

Lord *Wynford* said, that he considered capital punishment should be retained in cases of an aggravated nature, and where the prosecutrix was corroborated in her evidence. He thought the sympathy of the public would always go with the punishment, particularly when the offence had been committed by two or more persons, and where the prose-

cutrix had been clearly confirmed in her testimony by another witness. He could not help thinking that there was some inconsistency in proposing a bill of this importance the last week of the Session. He was of opinion that it was much better to leave the law as it stood than to legislate upon it in a hurry. By so doing he was satisfied that no improper execution would take place. He suggested that the law should be left as it was, until they could give the subject that deliberation which the importance of the case demanded. He was, however, of this opinion, that there should be always a confirmation of the evidence against the prisoner before capital punishment should be inflicted. If the House should divide upon the amendment, he should vote in favour of expunging the clause altogether.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, that their Lordships should recollect that the question was not altogether as to whether the individual deserved the punishment which the law awarded for this offence, but whether that punishment was calculated to prevent the commission of the crime. Now, if they found that the severity of the punishment attending the commission of this offence, and the probability of the prisoner's innocence, notwithstanding the evidence of the prosecutrix, if they found that these ideas were operating upon the jurors' minds, to deter them from finding the prisoner guilty, and thereby perhaps, in many cases enabling the really guilty to escape, surely they must see that the law required some alteration. The law was formed not so much for punishment as prevention. With this view of the question, he thought they would have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion, that by retaining this clause as it stood, they were adopting that course which was better calculated to prevent the commission of this offence than when the law was more severe. It was the certainty of punishment and not the severity of the punishment that prevented crime. It was because there was such a great probability of escape, that the offence had been so often committed. The noble Marquess who moved this question before the House had referred to certain returns in 1840, but he had included in the one number the charges of rape, and the charges of assaulting with the intent to commit rape. If the noble Marquess had pursued his inquiry, and kept those returns separate,

he would doubtless have found an argument strongly opposed to the part he had taken in this debate. It appeared by the returns of the number of charges for rape during the year 1840, there were fifty-six, of which number only eighteen had been convicted, being only about the one-third. But of the charges of assault with the intent to commit a rape there were 106, and seventy-four convictions, being about two-thirds. He would ask if those facts did not lead them to the conclusion, that by keeping up the severity of the punishment they were only encouraging rather than suppressing the crime.

The Earl of *Haddington* said, he had come down to the House with an inclination to vote for the omission of the words objected to by the noble Marquess; but after hearing the reasons urged for their retention, founded on the state of public opinion, and the experience of the last ten years, as well as the arguments of the four learned Lords who had spoken in the course of the debate, he confessed he could not vote for their omission. But he was most desirous to frame a proviso, if possible, to retain the punishment of death for aggravated cases of rape effected by a combination of persons.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* remarked that the law would adopt the principle of the New Poor-law, which threw the whole hardship on the mother in the case of a putative child, by throwing all the hardship on the woman in cases of violation. In order, therefore, to make room for the amendment which would have been proposed by his noble Friend, he would withdraw his amendment.

The Earl of *Chichester* said, that leaving the law capital in respect to certain aggravated cases would defeat the object of the legislature, for the counsel for the prisoners would, in pleading for them, work on the feelings of the jury by impressing on them that by bringing in a verdict of guilty they would, perhaps, hang an innocent man; and thus the doubt and the contemplation of the awful contingency would induce juries to acquit the criminals of whose guilt they might not have the slightest moral doubt. Such a clause would therefore be of no real protection to women. His experience as a chairman of quarter sessions had impressed upon him the opinion he now gave.

On the question that the clause stand



part of the bill, their Lordships divided. Contents 42; Not Contents 38: Majority 4.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* asked whether the noble Marquess opposite would on the third reading propose any proposition to meet aggravated cases of rape?

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, he thought the difficulties in framing such a provision would be insuperable; he should therefore neither propose a clause himself, nor agree to one proposed by any other noble Lord.

Bill reported—to be read a third time.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Monday, June 14, 1841.*

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Administration of Justice.—Read a second time:—Register of Voters.

Petitions presented. By Mr. Villiers, Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Protheroe, Lord Morpeth, Sir De Lacy Evans, Mr. Hawes, Mr. Denistoun, Mr. Hasle, and other hon. Members, from Nottingham, Crief, South Moulton, Wolverhampton, Holfax, Bolton, Croydon, Surrey, Westminster, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Sir Edward Filmer, Mr. Darby, Viscount Castlereagh, Lord Grimston, Sir J. Y. Bulfer, and other hon. Members, from West Sussex, Down, Hertfordshire, Devonshire, and other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Walter, from Essex, and other parts of the kingdom, complaining of the Operation of the New Poor-law Bill.—By Mr. Ainsworth, from Bolton, that Liverpool might be appointed a Station for the West India Mail Packets.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.—DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.] Mr. *Lock* wished to know what course Government meant to pursue in regard to the private bills before the House, in the event of a dissolution of Parliament.

Mr. *Labouchere* said, that he had given the matter his consideration, and he had no hesitation in saying, that if he held the same situation in the next Parliament which he held in the present, he would recommend that the course pursued in regard to private business at the dissolution of 1831 should be adopted on the present occasion. He did not believe, that any great amount of private business would be stopped by the dissolution of Parliament, but at the same time as there were one or two bills of great importance, he thought it but just that the House should take the same course in this respect as they did in 1831. It was impossible for the present House to pledge itself in any respect, but he had no doubt that the two Houses of Parliament would relieve those

parties who had proceeded with private business, so far as to put any bills which might be stopped by the dissolution, in the same situation in the next Parliament as they stood at the time of the dissolution.

APPROPRIATION—BURDENS ON LAND.] The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* having brought up the report of the committee on the Appropriation Bill,

Mr. *Hume* wished to offer one or two observations in regard to what he had asserted the other evening, that, under the Corn-laws as they at present existed, the agricultural interest levied from the community a greater sum than the whole amount of the taxes paid to the State. He wished to show that his assertion was not of so vague a nature as it was represented to be by the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge. He had stated that he considered the landed proprietors of England to be in a much more favoured condition than the landed proprietors of any other part of the world, and he was prepared to prove, that while the landed proprietors of this country were almost free from taxation, those of France paid nearly forty per cent. of the whole revenue of that country. He stated this on the authority of a statement of M. Humann, minister of finance—a statement which he considered unanswerable, and which had never been contradicted. In Belgium he found that the land-tax was 22 per cent., and in Holland 25 per cent. of the whole revenue of the state. He had stated that England was in the same situation in which France was in 1789, when the nobility were exempted from taxation, and when the whole revenue was levied from the working classes. He repeated, that the people of England were now in the same situation in which the people of France were at that period, and that while they paid the greater part of the revenue, the landed proprietors paid no portion of the revenue whatever—the amount they received in the shape of protective duties being considerably more than the taxes which they were called on to pay. The landed interest in this country, consisting principally of the aristocracy, he thought sufficiently showed that it was for the benefit of the aristocracy alone that the Corn-laws were maintained. They enjoyed in addition a large portion of the twenty millions paid to the army and



navy; and the journals of the House proved that every possible burden bearing on the land of the country had been removed by acts of Parliament. He had in his hand a list of taxes formerly levied on the whole of the community, but which, since 1816, had been gradually taken off the land while they were suffered to remain on the community at large. Taxes on husbandry, agricultural servants, horses, and so forth, had been repealed. The statement in his hand showed that 130,000 farmhouses were exempt from all taxes whatever, while taxes on houses were continued. The paper he had in his hand also showed that there was no less a sum than 983,000*l.* annual taxation which was formerly borne by the land, and which it did not now pay, but which other portions of the community still continued to pay. It was an attempt to delude the community to say that there were burdens on the land which the community did not bear. He would refer to the evidence before the committee in 1835, on the distress which existed at that time in the agricultural districts; and he thought he could satisfy the House how completely the landed proprietors in both Houses had passed laws to favour property; and he would tell the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, that when he proposed to give 8*s.* protection to the landed proprietor for every quarter of wheat, he was imposing a tax of the most onerous nature, and one which the landowners were not entitled to. Now, he begged the attention of the House to the evidence given before the committee on agricultural distress, which sat in 1835:—

“ Mr. John Rolfe, a farmer and appraiser of farming stock, renting from 200 to 300 acres, in the county of Bucks, was asked, ‘ Is there any other tax than the malt tax, which presses immoderately upon the farmer?—No, except the assessed taxes. I pay for my riding horse 1*l.* 8*s.* 9*d.*, and for my groom, 1*l.* No tax but the window tax presses on the farmer, and I pay for that 4*l.* a year. There is a county rate, the removal of which would amount to something, but not a great deal. Is there any other tax that presses on the farmer?—No direct tax that I know of.’

Mr. Henry Morton was asked,

“ What do you pay for your assessed taxes?—A mere nothing; our direct taxes are very small. I do not pay on all the land I hold above 10*l.*”

He (Mr. Hume) agreed with the hon. Gentleman, that if the landowners were

burdened with any tax that other classes of the community were not subject to, protection should be afforded to them to that extent, but he saw that they were not, while up to the present time upwards of 20,000,000*l.* had been repealed for the benefit of agriculture. He would proceed to state some of the burdens to which personal property was subject, but from which landed property was exempt. In 1798 Mr. Pitt had brought in two bills, the one for raising a revenue from the descent of landed property, the other for raising a revenue from the descent of personal property. The latter bill passed into a law; the former one was rejected on the third reading, and up to the present hour, personal property had continued liable to the tax. Since the act had passed, personal property had paid altogether 60,108,084*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* to that tax, while landed property was entirely exempt from any such charge. Now this relief from direct taxation was a point which hon. Gentlemen who wished to continue to tax the food of the community, ought fairly to consider. Then, besides this relief from direct taxation, the landed interest had had, through the weakness of the ministry in yielding to the country gentlemen, upwards of 80,000*l.* annually paid to them in aid of county rates, which amounted altogether to nearly 500,000*l.* Besides this, the landed proprietors had, during the last four years, received every year, in consequence of the rise in the price of corn, and other articles of food, a tax exceeding 50,000,000*l.* sterling, being more than the whole amount paid towards the wants of the state. It was useless to deny that the landed interest received 50,000,000*l.* per annum from the taxes on food. In the evidence taken before the import duties committee, Mr. Macgregor stated

“ That there were import duties on the following articles:—malt; beef and pork, fresh or slightly cured; lamb and mutton; cattle, sheep, and swine. High duties are levied on the following articles, to protect British agricultural and grazing interests:—tongues, 3*d.* each; bacon, 28*s.* per cwt.; pork, salted, 12*s.* per cwt.; sausages, 4*d.* per lb.; potatoes, 2*d.* per lb.; beer and mum, 3*l.* 1*s.* 1*d.*, or about 2*s.* per gallon; ale, other than mum, 2*l.* 13*s.*; beans, kidney or French, 10*d.* per bushel; fruits various duties; cider, 21*l.* 10*s.* per tun; hay, 24*s.* per load of 36 trusses; lard, 8*s.* per cwt.; onions, 3*s.* per bushel; lentils, 10*d.* per bushel; pearl barley, 17*s.* 6*d.* per cwt.; mustard and carraway, and many other seeds.”

The witness was then asked,

"Have you ever heard any estimate of that kind with respect to bread or flour? With respect to bread and flour, the difference which the labourer pays in money is from forty to eighty per cent more than the foreign consumer. Taking the gross amount of revenue paid into the Treasury at 50,000,000*l.* a year, have you been able to form an opinion what proportion this additional taxation on the food of the country would be?—I consider that the taxation imposed upon the country upon the production of wealth, through labour and ingenuity, by our duty on corn, and the provision duties and prohibitions, are far greater, probably much more than double the amount of taxation paid into the Treasury."

Another witness, Mr. Deacon Hume, was asked,

"You are of opinion, that all those protective duties are, in fact, a direct tax upon the community, by raising the price of every one of those articles to the consumer?—Most decidedly. I cannot analyse the charge which I pay in any other way, than that part of it is the prices of the commodity, and part is a duty, though it goes out of my private pocket, into another private pocket, instead of into that of the public. Have you ever made a calculation as to the amount of taxation which the community pay in consequence of the increased price of wheat and butchers' meat, which is occasioned by the monopoly now held by land?—I think that a tolerable calculation may be made of that increased charge. It is generally calculated that each person, upon the average, consumes a quarter of wheat a year. Assuming, then, the amount of duty that this wheat paid, or the price enhanced by protection, whatever that is, as far as bread goes, to be 10*s.*, it would be that amount upon the whole population. Then you could hardly say less than, perhaps, double that for butchers' meat and other matters; so that if we were to say, that the corn is enhanced by 10*s.* a quarter, there would be that 10*s.* and 20*s.* more as the increase of the price of meat, and other agricultural productions, including hay and oats for horses, barley for beer, as well as butter and cheese. That would be 36,000,000*l.* a year, and the public are in fact paying that as effectually out of their pockets, as if it did go to the revenue in the form of direct taxes."

The House would see, from this statement, that the estimate which he had given was extremely low. He considered that it was impossible for the House longer to persist in maintaining such a state of things, when they saw the misery and distress existing at this moment in every part of the country. He had statements from Birmingham, Bolton, and other places, which he would submit to the

House to-morrow, when he intended to enter into the subject at greater length. Before they persisted in refusing to admit an amelioration, he begged them to understand what were likely to be the consequences, and not to throw away the examples which history furnished of countries driven to desperation by famine and want. These were the grounds upon which he considered they had been defrauded of the opportunity of discussing the question of Corn-laws by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Tamworth's majority of one in the recent vote of want of confidence. If the right hon. Baronet had not introduced that motion, they would have had the question of the Corn-laws properly discussed. If the right hon. Gentleman had been candid, as he (Mr. Hume) expected he would have been, he would have stated the course he intended to pursue with respect to the Corn-laws.

Mr. G. Palmer thought that it was not only the height of impropriety to delude the people on a question like the present, but that it was wicked in the extreme, and the statement of the hon. Gentleman that the landed interest bore no share in the taxation of the country was a statement which would only tend to delude the public. The land-tax, the poor-rates, and tithes, all which were borne by the landed interest, did not amount to less than 50 per cent of the whole revenue.

Report received, and the Bill ordered to be engrossed.

DEBTS OF PARISHES.] Sir E. Knatchbull moved the order of the day for the adjourned debate on the Debts of Parishes Bill for the purpose of having it discharged.

Mr. Benjamin Wood said, he objected to the Bill, as it provided for the payment of certain debts—one upwards of seven years, the amount and number of which were not specified. He was desirous to ascertain what was the real object of the Bill, and was glad that the hon. Gentleman meant to withdraw it, as next session he trusted such information would be laid before the House as would enable it to legislate on the subject.

Mr. Warburton said, as far as he was concerned, he had no objection whatever to the Bill going through another stage. He was not responsible for the Bill not going through another stage. It would be most unreasonable to pass the Bill

at once, involving, as it did, parish property to an enormous amount, without instituting a full inquiry into the circumstances connected with the subject. He knew a parish in the metropolis which forty years ago borrowed a sum of money for the repair of a church, agreeing to pay 12 per cent. interest on the sum, and it was most unreasonable that parishes at the present time should be answerable for such contracts. He hoped the returns which his hon. Friend had moved for would procure the requisite information whenever the subject came again under the consideration of the House.

Order of the Day discharged, and Bill withdrawn.

CONTROVERTED ELECTIONS.] The Order of the Day for the House resolving itself into a Committee on the Controverted Elections Trials Bill having been read,

Sir *R. Peel* said, that the Bill referred principally to the technical objections in the present law, which it was desirable to amend. The clauses of the Bill were mostly of an unimportant character, but still, on the eve of a general election, with the probability that many election petitions would soon be presented, it appeared to him advisable to make the Bill as complete as possible. It should be remembered that the act would expire at the end of the first session of the ensuing Parliament. There were, however, some alterations of rather an important character. Under the proposed alteration of the law, a Member was disqualified for serving on the Select Committee, on the grounds of certain degrees of relationship, or of his having voted at the election. It had been found that in one or two instances Members had inadvertently been placed on committees against whom reasonable objections might be urged. Such, for instance, as their having taken an active part in the election; and in those instances Members had expressed a regret that they had not an opportunity of disqualifying themselves. He proposed in the amended measure, for the purpose of remedying that inconvenience, that any Member who had satisfied the majority of the committee that there were good reasons, not having reference to considerations of personal convenience, but affecting the impartiality of the committee, why he should be excused from serving, that in such a

case the committee should have the power of dispensing with his services. The amended act also provided for the more impartial appointment of chairman, and for a better arrangement in the selection of the committee. He thought these substantial alterations ought to be made with the decisive opinion of the House in their favour. He was afraid it would be very difficult to obtain the voluntary consent of Members to fill the office of chairman, and if it was a necessary duty, he thought the House ought to provide for its execution. He would suggest, that the extent of the duty that might be imposed upon any Member to act as chairman should be limited, and that if he were called upon to preside at several committees, it should be provided that if he claimed exemption (having once served the office) he should be entitled to it during the Session, and that the general committee should have the power of nominating another chairman. He felt exceedingly grateful to those Gentlemen who had performed those duties. He thought the bill a great improvement; at all events every one must feel it a relief to have got rid of those painful scenes which were formerly exhibited in the nomination of a select committee. At all events that law must be acted on during the next Session, and therefore it was desirable to make the experiment perfect if possible. He trusted the House would approve of the course he had pursued in re-enacting the whole bill, instead of merely introducing a separate bill to make the alteration, so that one law might contain the whole law of the subject.

Mr. *C. Buller* said, that the bill of the right hon. Baronet was a great improvement on the former system; it altered the original system in the right direction, and whatever defects it might leave, they might be easily repaired. There was one alteration, however, which the right hon. Baronet proposed to make, to which he felt an objection. The original committee on controverted elections, of which he was the chairman, proposed a plan by which election committees were to be selected as before, by chance; but in order to secure the permanence and competence of one person at least on the committee, that committee proposed that an assessor should be chosen out of the House, who should act as chairman. But the right hon. Baronet proposed a bill as an improvement,

which did away with the selection by chance. The committee on controverted elections did not venture so far as this, which he admitted was the better plan; but the right hon. Gentleman refused to act upon the suggestion with regard to a permanent chairman. When that suggestion was made in the House, there was a general feeling evidenced in its favour, and though the House did not adopt an assessor, they adopted the present panel of chairmen. Now, what he (Mr. Buller) objected to in the proposal of the right hon. Baronet was, that it did away with the whole of the permanence of the system. It was true that, by the existing mode, they did not secure men of legal knowledge or of legal experience; but at any rate, they had the experience which was acquired by the hon. Members of that panel having before sat on election committees; and the committees were presided over by Gentlemen who understood the prominent points. The right hon. Baronet also proposed to make one man chairman of a committee during the whole of a Session; but that, he thought, would be imposing a duty on Members of this House of a very onerous nature; and would, in fact, do away with the advantages derived from the present method. It would be very difficult to find in a new Session many Members of this House qualified to take such an office. He felt that a permanent chairman would be of great importance; so important, that he desired to have the sense of the House upon the subject, but he would not take advantage of the lateness of the Session to press his opposition.

Viscount *Howick* concurred in the opinions of the hon. Member for Liskeard, as to the advantages of the bill of the right hon. Baronet Sir R. Peel; and he thought that, the object of that bill would be destroyed unless they had a permanent chairman, and that it would be impossible to impose on any Gentleman of this House, at the commencement of a new Parliament, a duty so onerous as that of permanent chairman of a committee during the whole of a Session. Having himself had the misfortune to serve on a committee since the new act came into operation, his experience confirmed him in the opinion that it was necessary to give these committees the benefit of professional assistance in some shape or other. Difficulties and embarrassments were experi-

enced by the committee, in consequence of questions which were raised by counsel on each side; and which, he was convinced, a Gentleman with the advantages of a professional education would have been able to settle at once. He believed that the appointment of professional Gentlemen as assessors or permanent chairmen, who should be paid for their labours, was a plan which the Legislature would be forced to adopt at no very distant period.

House in Committee.

Sir *R. Peel*, in order to obviate the objection made with regard to the onerousness of the duty of chairman to a committee during the whole of a Session, moved the introduction of a proviso, to the effect that every Member on the chairman's panel who had served on one or more election committees during a Session, should be excused from serving on such committee, either as chairman or member, and he should be discharged from attendance on such committee, upon making an application to that effect. If the House did not adopt something like that which he now proposed, in the next Session of Parliament they would have to depend on the services of a voluntary chairman, who, perhaps, would find something onerous in a pecuniary way in the performance of his duties, and, therefore, would refuse to serve, leaving only the alternative of selecting persons for the office who were not qualified to fill it. That was the danger which he apprehended, and he hoped that those hon. Gentlemen who might accept the office of chairman would endure the suspicion which was inseparable from that acceptance, and which could only attach for a very short time to those who honourably and honestly performed their duty, a suspicion which would not press heavily upon their minds, and which would be counterbalanced by the consideration that the proper discharge of their duty had gained them the approbation of this House. The balance was in favour of an alteration in the law, and he hoped the House would express an opinion strongly in approbation of the clause.

Lord *J. Russell* thought the right hon. Baronet was acting judiciously in proposing this amendment.

Viscount *Mahon* concurred that all the argument was in favour of the right hon. Baronet's amendment.

Sir *E. Sugden* agreed with the noble Lord, that it would be a great advantage

to get a permanent chairman; but as a permanent chairman could not be obtained under any system which could be adopted, the right hon. Baronet's amendment was the only one which the House could agree to.

Proviso agreed to.

House resumed. Report received. Bill to be read a third time.

REGISTER OF ELECTORS (HERTFORD).] On the motion of Mr. T. Duncombe, the Register of Electors Bill was read a second time, and, the standing orders having been suspended, was carried into committee, and was going through the committee, when the House was counted out. Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

*Tuesday, June 15, 1841.*

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Marriage Act Amendment; Election Petitions Trials; Militia Pay; Appropriation.—Read a second time:—Metropolis Improvements Expenses; Bribery at Elections.

Petitions presented. By Lord Rolle, the Duke of Rutland, Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, Lord Beaumont, the Marquess of Salisbury, and Lord Beauchamp, from Devon, Leicester, Lincoln, Yorkshire, Essex, Worcester, and several other places, against Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Brougham, and Earl Fitzwilliam, from Devonport, and St. Asaph's, for the Jews' Declaration Bill.—By Lord Wharncliffe, from the Guardians of a Union in Yorkshire, for an Alteration of the Poor-law; from a place in the same county, in favour of the Inland Bonding Warehouses; and from Sheffield, and its neighbourhood, for an Alteration of the Marriage Law.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.] The Earl of Aberdeen on presenting a petition from the seven suspended ministers of Strathbogie, said, that he should feel it necessary, for a few moments, to claim the attention of their Lordships, as well as of the noble Viscount opposite, while he offered to the House some observations on this painful subject. The case had been brought before their Lordships about a month ago, by a noble Lord (Dunfermline) with so much force and ability that it was not necessary for him to go over the circumstances again. The petitioners complained that they were suspended from their sacred office by a sentence of the General Assembly, and they called on the House to interfere for the purpose of preventing that sentence of deposition from being carried into effect. The noble Viscount, on the occasion to which he had alluded, had declined to interfere for the purpose of rendering justice to those individuals. He said that the majority of

the General Assembly knew perfectly well that the Government highly disapproved of their conduct, that their claims were unfounded, and that even if they were well founded, the manner in which they were brought forward was highly objectionable. The noble Viscount as usual, added, that he would enforce the law and see that justice was done; but he would take no step to check the General Assembly in the course they were pursuing. Since that time those individuals had been formally deposed from their situations by the General Assembly. It was sufficient to say, that these gentlemen were so deposed simply and exclusively for their obedience to the law of the land. No accusation was brought against them, no pretence was advanced of any irregularity or impropriety of conduct on their part. On the contrary, it was admitted that these gentlemen were amongst the most exemplary and excellent parish ministers existing in the Church of Scotland. Several of them, whom he himself knew, were men of the highest reputation in every respect. They were deposed not only because they obeyed the law, but because they were forced to obey the law. They were willing to obey the orders of the church courts, until, by the decision of the civil courts, they found that they would be liable to punishment, in person and estate, if they refused obedience to the law of the land. It was impossible that such a state of things as this could be suffered to exist, and he attributed its continuance to remissness on the part of the Government. He found no fault with the statement of the noble Viscount, that he would not bring forward any measure on the subject, accompanied as it was with the declaration that he would support, uphold, and maintain the law. But no effort had been made to maintain the law; and when individuals were in consequence put to an enormous expense for the purpose of supporting their rights, which were illegally invaded, it became a public question, and he conceived that the Government were bound to come forward and to protect them. The sentence fulminated against these gentlemen had excited throughout Scotland feelings of the deepest indignation. At Edinburgh a very large and influential meeting was held, at which resolutions were agreed to, sympathizing with the situation of these gentlemen, and reprobating the conduct



of the Assembly. At Glasgow a similar meeting was held. Petitions on this subject, most numerous signed by persons of all parties, had been agreed to; and but for the great political excitement which prevailed throughout the country, and interfered with all other proceedings, the expression of indignation would, he was convinced, be universal. After deposing these gentlemen, the Assembly notified, that the parishes from which they had been ejected were vacant, and stated, that the patrons might present to them. If they neglected to do so for six months, the Church might then, *jure devoluto*, appoint to them, and certainly the legality of such an appointment might be contested. But this sentence of deposition, iniquitous and illegal as it was, had been suspended by the supreme court. An interdict had been issued, forbidding the appointment of ministers to those parishes which were not, in fact, vacated; and he had no doubt, that the sentence of deposition would be finally and formally pronounced to be illegal. The presumption manifested by the General Assembly in these proceedings was never equalled by the Church of Rome; tyranny, such as was exhibited in this case, would annihilate the liberties of the people of this country; but it surely would not be tolerated in the present day. The division of that House on the Auchterarder case had been set at nought, and he would ask the noble Viscount—he would ask the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack—was that the way in which they would suffer the judgments of their Lordships' House to be treated? He maintained that this was a case in which the Government ought to have ordered the Lord-Advocate to act, for the purpose of putting an end to such illegal proceedings. He could refer to other acts of the General Assembly which were no less illegal, but he did not, on this occasion, wish to dwell on them or to go beyond the particular case to which he had called their Lordships' attention. The noble Earl read some extracts from the petition, in which the petitioners stated, that they had been deposed purely and simply because they had obeyed a special statute; that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, itself established by law, had thought proper to set aside those very laws by which it was supported, and they prayed that some measure might be adopted to

shield them from the effects of the sentence of deposition.

Viscount Melbourne agreed with the noble Earl, that the circumstances of this case could not be viewed but with feelings of the deepest regret, involving, as they did, not only the state of the Church of Scotland, but the position and interests of the parties whose petition the noble Earl had presented. He was not, however, prepared to admit that there had been any remissness on the part of Ministers, or that they ought to have taken a course different from that which they had adopted. He considered that Government could not have taken any effectual step for the purpose of terminating those differences that would not be liable to very grave objections. It was true that Government and Parliament might have put an end to the dispute by deciding in favour of one or other of the contending parties. They might have decided in favour of the General Assembly, and declared the measures pursued by that body to have been just and proper, or they might have declared that the General Assembly were acting illegally. They might have done this; but either of these measures would have been an intermeddling with the internal affairs of the Church of Scotland, and might be attended with the most serious and injurious effects. He, therefore, conceived that to have recourse to an Act of Parliament, for the purpose of settling the question would have been dangerous and unwise. The noble Earl said, that the petitioners were suffering in consequence of their obedience to the law of the land. That certainly was true, and he was sorry that it was so. But in viewing this subject, it was necessary for their Lordships to consider the nature of the question in dispute. The General Assembly had exercised powers, their right to exercise which was denied by the court of session. The question was brought under the consideration of the court in Scotland, and he found that a minority of the judges, considerable, both in point of number and talent, were with the General Assembly, and supported their claim. It appeared that a wide difference of opinion existed between the great ecclesiastical authority and the great civil authority in Scotland. The General Assembly declared that the civil court had no jurisdiction in this case, and six of the civil judges, amongst whom was Mr. Jeffrey, were of that opinion. The noble Earl said,

that the Church of Rome never carried its presumption further than the Church of Scotland had done on this occasion ; but the Church of Scotland was equal in presumption to the Church of Rome at any day, of which many instances could be produced from history. There was here a great difference of opinion between great authorities with reference to great and important principles. The circumstance reminded him of the contest in the time of James I. between the ecclesiastical and civil courts in this country. That contest led to much that was unseemly and unfitting. That contest was not, however, put an end to by unlegislative decision, but was allowed to work itself out by the efforts of conflicting parties. He felt very deeply for the sufferings of those individuals, but he did not conceive that Government were called on to interfere. The noble Earl had pointed out one course by which this question might be settled—namely, the decision of the civil court. The Church would, it appeared, *jure devoluto*, if the vacant parishes were not filled up in six months, proceed to appoint ministers ; and on the legality of such appointments the civil court would decide. He did not say whether it would be wise to bring the question to that issue ; but certainly, if that course were adopted it would lead to a decision one way or the other. It was, he repeated, the wish of her Majesty's Government to enforce the law ; and he was certain that the Lord-advocate had, in this case, done all that appertained to his office, and would hereafter do all that his duty called on him to do with reference to it.

The Earl of *Haddington* said, the noble Viscount, although he agreed with his noble Friend as to the unfortunate situation in which the petitioners were placed by the conduct of the General Assembly, had not given any opinion on the subject. Through his whole speech he studiously avoided giving any opinion. He had said nothing—he had done nothing. The noble Viscount observed, that the Lord-advocate would certainly do his duty. Perhaps, the Lord-advocate was acting under his orders, and if so he should be glad to learn what those orders were. His noble Friend, in the course of his observations, had alluded to the Auchterarder case. In that instance, the proceedings of the General Assembly were directed not alone against the decision of the Court of Ses-

sion, but against the solid judgment of that House. His noble Friend wished the noble Viscount to cause the law to be enforced in that case, but the noble Viscount questioned the propriety of doing so. In that case there was no difference of opinion in the court below, and the decision of that court was, after solemn argument, confirmed by their Lordships' House. But now, the noble Viscount said, he felt great difficulty in making up his mind to interfere, because two or three of the judges, for whose learning and talent he entertained great respect, happened to be of a different opinion from the majority of their brethren. So that because there was a difference of opinion amongst the judges, a great wrong was to remain unredressed. In the course of the present Session, in answer to a question put by him, the noble Viscount stated, that the law should be enforced, and the noble Viscount had repeated that statement twice since ; but now they saw what the noble Viscount's idea of supporting the law was. His mode of upholding and enforcing the law was to do nothing. To talk of two contending authorities, the one being the majority of the General Assembly, and the other the Court of Session, upon a great constitutional question, was most extraordinary language for a Minister of the Crown to hold ; and it was by suffering his mind to remain in that state of doubt and vacillation that matters had assumed an aspect which filled the lovers of peace and of the welfare of the church of Scotland with the greatest dismay. If the noble Viscount had interfered two years and a half ago, before matters became so complicated, the law, no doubt, would have been obeyed ; he had not done so, however, and they now saw the bitter fruits of that do-nothing system by which the conduct of Ministers had been so long characterized on more questions than with regard to the church of Scotland. There was one other point which had not yet been referred to in that House, and which, as this would probably be the last opportunity of discussing the subject this Session, he would take the liberty to mention, to show the *animus* by which the majority of the General Assembly was actuated. This very last act had been to appoint a special commission to visit the different Presbyteries in which questions might be pending relative to this matter between the civil and ecclesiastical autho-

rites, with full powers, five being a quorum, to deal with them in the settlement of parishes, church discipline, and all other ecclesiastical matters, as they might think fit. In other words, they had appointed a roving commission, to resist the law as occasion might arise—the Assembly thus assuming to itself the power to suspend—and if to suspend, why not to abolish?—the whole constitution of the church of Scotland as by law established. He presumed that fact could not be known to the noble Viscount, or he would not have spoken of this as a great question between two contending authorities—the church courts and the law of the land. In common with every friend to the peace of Scotland and the welfare of the establishment, he deeply regretted that Ministers had not pursued another course, and that even now no assurance was given that the Lord-Advocate would be required to adopt measures for enforcing the law.

The Marquess of *Normanby* assured the noble Earl that references had been made to the Lord-Advocate, and communications held with him in every stage of the proceedings. The Lord-Advocate was perfectly aware of the desire of the Government, whenever in his discretion he thought the exercise of his official duties would tend to settle the question, that he should interfere, and if that officer had not taken any step, it was because, upon a full consideration of the case, the time had not arrived when he beneficially could interfere. There were, he knew, some questions still under the consideration of the Lord-Advocate; but he was anxious that the impression should not go abroad that the Lord-Advocate had not been consulted, or that he had any doubt as to the line of conduct he should pursue.

The Earl of *Haddington* concluded, from the statement of the noble Marquess, that Government had given no orders to the Lord-Advocate, and that it was left entirely to his own discretion when and how he should proceed, it being perfectly notorious that the Lord-Advocate was himself friendly rather than otherwise to the course pursued by the majority of the General Assembly.

The Marquess of *Breadalbane* begged their Lordships not to be guided upon this important question by the very strong expressions which had been used by those on the other side of the House. The majority of the General Assembly had an ex-

tremely difficult duty to perform in asserting principles which they conscientiously believed were not only based on the fundamental principles, but also essential to the preservation of the church of Scotland. Until the whole matter was finally settled by the decision of the courts of law, it would be precipitate and dangerous for the Government to interfere.

The Duke of *Argyll* deprecated the discussion of this important question on the mere presentation of a petition.

Lord *Brougham* was not surprised that his two noble Friends who spoke last, with the peculiar views they entertained upon this matter, should deprecate any continuance of the debate, and be very well pleased to rest their case, as it were, on the statement of his noble Friend at the head of the Government, and the noble Secretary of State within whose department the question more immediately and properly came; but, whatever they might have meant—he did not ascribe any such intention, but anything having a more fatal tendency on the parties engaged in these manifestly and notoriously illegal proceedings—anything having a more direct, inevitable, and powerful tendency to encourage the breakers of the law in Scotland he could not imagine. His noble Friend the Secretary of State had merely said, that the Lord-Advocate had frequently considered the subject, that if he thought anything was necessary he would act; that from his not acting as yet, he concluded he had not felt any such necessity; but when the necessity arose, his noble Friend took for granted the act would be done. Anything less satisfactory to those who wished the law to be maintained, and peace restored by proper firmness in its execution, he could hardly conceive. His noble Friend, at the head of the Government, had made a statement which he could not help thinking would be taken by the wrongdoers in Scotland as in their favour, instead of being against them. His noble Friend said, this was a grave question: no doubt, when the peace of the country was disturbed, and the violators of the law constituted the highest judicatory in the church of Scotland. There was a division of opinion, said his noble Friend, in the Court of Session, when one of the cases was first decided; there were learned and great authorities in the minority upon that occasion. [Viscount *Melbourne*: I said



there was a difficulty in legislating on the subject.] Why, no one called for a new law. The law was already decided and determined, first by the Court of Session, and then by their Lordships sitting as a court of appeal in the last resort, clearly, unanimously, and unhesitatingly affirming the opinion of the Court of Session. No declaratory law was necessary. The law was actually declared and acted upon by the proper legal authorities. There was another reason against any declaratory law on this subject. The pretension of the violators of the law was, that the Legislature itself, Queen, Lords, and Commons, could not pass any law binding on the General Assembly; and if a law were passed to-morrow, they would violate it. Surely, that was a sufficient reason why the Executive Government of the country should take the proper steps to execute the law, and give peace to the land. He, for one, would never suffer it to be said, without protesting against it, that a mere division of opinion amongst the judges of any court, before which any question was brought, should be held in any quarter as the shadow of a ground or pretence for refusing obedience to the law, as declared by the majority.

Viscount *Melbourne* begged to say, that nothing was farther from his mind than to give anything like encouragement to those parties who had disobeyed the law. He had said, that the Government had executed the law, and that it was their intention to execute the law, but he had also said, that the General Assembly having done that which it was contended they had no right to do, the General Assembly having, as was contended, by the deprivation of these seven Ministers, exceeded their power and authority, he did say, that means existed at present to enforce the execution of the law, and that it was for Government to consider whether they would not trust to the law itself for its own vindication, and he must add that no noble Lord had pointed out a course, within the power of Government, by which the existing law could be more speedily and effectually enforced, than by those means which the existing law possessed.

Lord *Brougham* was quite sure, it never could have been the intention of his noble Friend to give the slightest encouragement to the violators of the law; but intention was one thing and tendency another; and this he would say, that the

tendency of the speeches of his noble Friends and their conduct was undeniably—contrary to their intentions—to encourage the violators of the law. His noble Friend had asked, what Government could do better by way of enforcing the law than leaving the law to execute itself. He would tell his noble Friend, in one sentence, one course which would have a most speedy and effectual result in discouraging the violation of the law, by protecting and encouraging those who obeyed it, and that was to give directions to the agents and law officers of the Crown in Scotland, to relieve those who were oppressed by the wrongdoers from the costs and risks of their oppression.

Lord *Belhaven* said, he deeply regretted the state to which Scotland had been brought in consequence of this question. He must confess, that he did not very well see what her Majesty's Ministers could do to put an end to this dispute by ordering the Lord-Advocate to do anything, for he did not know what he was to do in the present circumstances of the case; but he thought some means would and could be found if there were not so much difference and warmth of opinion here as well as in Scotland. The only way in which it was possible that this question could be settled was by trying the question on a new presentation, in consequence of the deposition of these Ministers.

The Earl of *Aberdeen* thought this a most preposterous suggestion. The question had been tried already without bringing the matter anything nearer a settlement. The House had decided that it was the duty of the Presbytery to take a particular person on his trials. They refused to take him on his trials; not only that, but they ordered another man to be presented to the living. It was a mistake to suppose this a conflict between two authorities with co-ordinate jurisdiction. [Viscount *Melbourne*.—The authorities may be conflicting without being co-ordinate.] But the noble Marquess, the Secretary of State, for the Home Department said, co-ordinate. The noble Viscount stated, the question as between constituted authorities differing in opinion. That was not the state of the case; there was no collision; the Church of Scotland was established by special Acts of Parliament. Those acts imposed conditions. Who was to interpret those acts?

The General Assembly? They had no right to do so; they might obey them; but he had yet to learn that their interpretation of those acts was worth one farthing. The court of session was the tribunal to interpret those acts, and their Lordships on appeal from that court. That decision he looked on as final. The General Assembly had violated those acts. Knowing the opinions of noble Lords opposite—knowing how entirely they accorded with his own views—he thought it rather too bad of them to shuffle with this question in the way they had hitherto done.

The Lord Chancellor was understood to observe, that the Auchterarder case came before their Lordships in consequence of the operation of the Veto Act. The party presented had been refused by the Presbytery, in consequence of not having the majority required by the Veto. The subject of the appeal was, that the Presbytery might be ordered to put the party on his trials. Whatever took place in the Auchterarder case, that was the extent of the decision of that House.

Lord Brougham said, his noble Friend might have added that that was the judgment which the General Assembly had disobeyed. That was the judgment which the court of session had endeavoured to enforce—that was the judgment the enforcing of which had occasioned the deprivation, or at least the suspension of the seven Ministers. Until he saw the law as it stood fully obeyed, he would never give his sanction to the enactment of a new law. His noble Friend denied this to be a conflict between co-ordinate jurisdictions; but he (Lord Brougham) could not understand how it could be called a conflict at all, unless the jurisdictions were co-ordinate. A Master in Chancery might disobey the Lord Chancellor; in that case he would be guilty of disobedience if you will; of a violation of duty; of a breach of law; but there could be no conflict between the two, because there was no co-ordinate authority.

Viscount Melbourne: It is a conflict, though an unequal one.

Petition laid on the Table.

CHARITABLE TRUSTS' BILL.] The Lord Chancellor rose to move the second reading of the Charitable Trusts' Bill. He said, the objects of this bill were very simple and most important. It had been

intimated to him, that there were some objections to this bill; but, as he was totally ignorant what those objections could be, he must wait to hear them. The object of the bill was to secure to the poor the benefit of the property devoted to their assistance; and that was attempted to be effected in two ways, applicable to different species of property. The first object of the bill was applicable to all charities; it was to avoid the expense which was necessarily and constantly incurred when new trustees were appointed. Whatever the nature or origin of the trust, and whoever the trustees might be, they, of course, were liable to be trustees by death; and it therefore became necessary to appoint new trustees; and on their appointment it was necessary that there should be a transfer of the charitable property to those new trustees, as they could not perform their duties properly without such transfer, and there was, therefore, continually great expense thrown on the trust fund in paying the attorney employed, for stamps, and for the expense of the conveyance. These expenses, of course, lessened the benefit of the charitable trust to the poor. The object of the bill was, to make the act of appointing new trustees *ipso facto* vest the property in the trustees so appointed. The other object of the bill was not a mere question of expense, but a question in many instances of actual loss to the poor of the property. Their Lordships were called on to turn their attention to the subject; and to do what they could to prevent the inconvenience which had arisen from a defective statute. In the Municipal Corporations Reform Bill their Lordships might be aware that a provision was made for removing charity trusts from such corporations as they were vested in, or from persons, members of corporations, where the property was vested in individuals, but still under the jurisdiction of the corporations. He was not informed of what had taken place when that bill (the Municipal Corporations Bill) passed through their Lordships' House, nor could he explain how it was, that that enactment, as it regarded these trusts, was left as it stood in the statute. The words of the statute were,—

“That all the estate, right, interest, and title which at the time existed in the corporation, or in any individual holding it for the corporation, shall continue till the 1st day of

August, 1836, or until Parliament shall otherwise order, and from, and after that time shall utterly cease and determine; and after that period the Lord Chancellor, or the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal, shall have powers to make such orders as they see fit for the re-appointment of such trustees."

The 1st of August arrived, and Parliament had taken no steps, nor made any provision for these trusts. Those therefore who had an interest in these trusts had applied to the Lord Chancellor for the appointment of trustees. But though the trustees had been appointed, there was nothing in the act to enable the Court of Chancery to vest the property in the trustees. Trustees had been appointed, but what was to become of the legal title of the estates? It was obvious that those who held them before ceased to hold them on the 1st of August, 1836; but Parliament did not vest the property of these estates in any other persons, and it had been a subject which had greatly puzzled conveyancers to determine, what had become of the legal estate. Some supposed that the legal estate was escheated to the Crown; some to the heir-at-law of the original founder of the charity; but it had been established beyond all controversy, that it was not gone to the trustees. It was very true, that in many instances this question had not been raised; but the tenants under these trustees had paid what they knew was due. But it was equally true, that in many other instances this had not been done, and that those who held trust property had put the trustees at defiance, and asked them to show their title, which was to prove, that they had the legal estate in them to give them legal power and authority to compel those tenants to pay what was due; and in very many instances, the trustees not having that legal power to compel payment, the objects of the charity had been defeated, and the trustees could not administer it to the poor. He had unfortunately been made very much acquainted with these evils, and had had very many communications from persons who had found it impossible to compel payment, and the only way to remedy this defect was by the authority of Parliament. This clause of the bill then before their Lordships proposed, that the legal estate and interest of the property, of which the persons so appointed were trustees, should by this act be vested in them. He should suppose

that their Lordships would approve of the objects of this act; it was the only means of checking the evil which existed, and he should hope, that it would pass, and restore to poor persons those various charities which would be affected by it. He concluded with moving, that the bill be read a second time.

Lord Lyndhurst having presented a petition from 2,000 bankers, merchants, and others, inhabitants of Bristol, praying against the Bill, would state very shortly his ground of objection to it. It was a Bill which embraced very important considerations, and questions of very great difficulty; and he conceived that a Bill of this description ought not to have come up to that House at such a period of the session, and particularly in the state in which the two Houses of Parliament were placed at the present moment. The object of this Bill was to confirm and complete the title of those trustees who had been appointed under the Municipal Reform Act. He had no inclination or disposition whatever to do anything to assist the title of those persons. A great number of these trustees consisted of Dissenters from the church of England, and a great part of the property to which the trusts referred consisted of estates, originally granted for purposes connected with the church of England, and of advowsons. The trustees therefore became entitled to present to livings. This was a reason why he thought their Lordships ought to confirm the title of the trustees. With reference to the corporation of Bristol, he learned from the petition which had been intrusted to him, that the number of trustees appointed for the management of the estates of the city amounted to twenty-one; ten of them were Dissenters, and of the eleven who professed to belong to the church of England, some were tolerably lukewarm in their professions. A great number of the estates had obviously been granted for the benefit of members of the church of England, and there were three advowsons among the property. When the Municipal Corporations Reform Bill was under their Lordships' consideration, what course had they pursued? It was urged that many corporations possessed advowsons, and their Lordships deemed that those advowsons should be sold, and until that was done the presentment should vest in the Bishops of the respective dioceses. A remedy was therefore pro-

vided for that particular evil; but the case of charitable trustees possessing advowsons had been overlooked. Had their Lordships' attention been called to it, they would doubtless have made some similar provision, and he was the more entitled to say so, because he found in the Irish Municipal Act an enactment providing that none but corporators belonging to the church of England should interfere with property bequeathed for the benefit of the church of England. On these grounds he objected to anything tending to confirm the title of these trustees. It was owing to the neglect of the Government that a general Bill on the subject had not been brought forward before. The present measure ought to be considered by a committee up-stairs, and was not fit to be passed at that late period of the session. He opposed the whole Bill, for the first clause, though drawn up in general terms, would by a side-wind effect the purpose he objected to. He moved that the Bill be read a second time that day three months.

Lord Brougham expressed his surprise at the opposition of the noble and learned Lord. An omission had been made in the Municipal Bill, which gave rise to a most pernicious state of things as regarded the administration of charitable property; and if their Lordships did not pass the present Bill, not only would Dissenters not have the patronage of this church preferment, but nobody else would. He could not see what danger could arise to the establishment, if in some corporations Dissenters should have the appointment to livings. There was nothing in the law of the country to prevent Dissenters presenting; and even Jews might do so in some parishes where they were rate-payers. All that was required was, that the party presented should be qualified under the Uniformity Act.

The Earl of Warwick had a petition to present against this Bill from the corporation of Warwick. That corporation possessed property of much value, which they stated was not charitable, but bequeathed for the purposes of the church and the corporation; and the petitioners contended that this property ought not to be taken away from them. He should certainly vote against the Bill.

The Lord Chancellor, in reply, observed, that under existing circumstances the property to which the Bill referred was in

a state that rendered it impossible to be managed. The objections of his noble and learned Friend rested on facts; but of those facts no proof whatever was before their Lordships, and, even if they were, that would be no reason for preventing the people from the enjoyment of the rights which this measure would confer. His noble and learned Friend had also complained of the Government having left the former enactment imperfect, under the pledge of bringing forward some other measure to regulate charitable trusts, but that no such measure had been passed. He could only say, that one of the first measures which he had had to propose to their Lordships after having a seat in that House was a measure for that purpose, but it was thrown out by their Lordships.

Lord Lyndhurst said, that with respect to what had fallen from his noble and learned Friend as to there being no proof of the facts on which he had objected to this Bill, all he (Lord Lyndhurst) wanted was a committee to inquire into the facts of the case.

The House divided on the question that the Bill be then read a second time. Contents 36; Not-contents 52: Majority 16.

#### *List of the NOT-CONTENTS.*

ARCHBISHOPS.	VISCOUNTS.
Canterbury	Middleton
Armagh	Hawarden
DUKE.	Gort
Rutland	Canning
MARQUESSSES.	Canterbury
Salisbury	BISHOPS.
Exeter	Bangor
Camden	Rochester
Ormonde	Gloucester
EARLS.	LORDS.
Winchelsea	Willoughby de Broke
Shaftesbury	Saltoun
Abingdon	Sondes
Morton	Southampton
Haddington	Kenyon
Galloway	Douglas
Warwick	Calthorpe
Hardwicke	Bayning
Clanwilliam	Bolton
Mountcashel	Carbery
Bandon	Redesdale
Russlyn	Colchester
Wilton	Bexley
Harrowby	Wharnccliffe
Verulam	Lyndhurst
Brownlow	Stuart de Rothesay
Beauchamp	Heytesbury
Somers	Ashburton
Ripon	

*Paired off.*

NOT-CONTENTS.	CONTENTS.
Duke of Buccleuch	Lord Hatherton
Duke of Argyll	Earl of Rosebery
Duke of Dorset	Lord Strafford
Duke of Buckingham	Earl of Thanet
Marquis of Bute	Bishop of Norwich
Marquis of Ailsa	Bishop of Durham
Earl of Eglinton	Lord Belhaven
Earl of Airlie	Lord Clifford
Earl of Aberdeen	Lord Montfort
Earl of Dartmouth	Lord Dacre
Earl Cadogan	Earl of Erroll
Earl of Wicklow	Lord Bateman
Earl of Clare	Lord Crewe
Earl of Lucan	Earl of Zetland
Earl Manvers	Duke of Bedford
Earl of Glengall	Earl of Scarborough
Viscount Sydney	Marquis of Anglesey
Viscount Combermere	Earl of Leitrim
Lord Colville	Lord Byron
Lord Walsingham	Earl of Morley
Lord Rolle	Lord Talbot of Malahide
Lord Forester	Earl of Uxbridge
Lord Feversham	Earl of Yarborough
Lord Tenterden	Lord Hill
Lord Cowley	Marquis of Headfort
Lord Skelmersdale	Lord Stanley of Alderley
Lord Abinger	Duke of Norfolk

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, June 15, 1841.*

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a first time:—Railways (Ireland).  
Read a third time:—Election Petitions; Appropriation;  
Militia Pay.

WINDSOR GREAT PARK.] Colonel *Salwey* wished to ask the Secretary of the Treasury a question which was not only of personal concern to himself, but in which the public were also materially concerned. It was a matter of notoriety that there was a public highway through Windsor Great Park which led from Staines to Reading, through Egham and Inglefield-green. On Wednesday night last he was passing along this road in a carriage, and when he arrived at the Bishop's-gate he found it locked, and he was kept waiting until some one came to open it full five minutes. The person who appeared spoke to him with rudeness, and told him that he had no right to be there after ten o'clock at night, and that he might go through for that time, but he should not in future. Now, he thought that there must be a great assumption of power on the part of somebody connected with the park to cause all this; it looked as if there was an intention to defraud the public of a

valuable road. What he wanted to know of the Secretary of the Treasury was, by whose order and whose authority that gate was shut after ten o'clock at night.

Mr. *E. J. Stanley* said, that the keeper had no authority to act as the hon. Member had represented, and his conduct must have originated in some mistake, which he would take care to see rectified. The gate, he believed, was always closed at twelve o'clock, in order to prevent the deer from escaping. He would, however, inquire into the matter.

Subject at an end.

DISTRESS OF THE COUNTRY.] Mr. *Scholefield* said, he had to apologize to the House for his own inability to do justice to the motion he had to make. He could assure the House there was vast and extensive suffering in the manufacturing districts of the country, although the word distress was as seldom heard within those walls as was the mention of the national debt, yet it was doubtless owing to the national debt that so much distress existed. Not only had the distress been extensive, but it now affected the home trade as well as the foreign. In fact, so much money was required to procure food at the present high price of corn, that there was little left to buy clothes with, and consequently, the demand for the home trade was proportionately curtailed; nor was the foreign trade in a better condition than the home trade. We had now competitors in every market with which we traded, and unfortunately were undersold in too many of them. The German manufacturers of hardware could take their goods to all parts of the globe, and there undersell the English; they could even introduce articles of cutlery at Sheffield on lower terms than our own manufacturers could supply them. And what gave the advantage to our foreign competitors? We had equal industry, equal skill, and as much capital as foreigners possessed; but our industrious artisans could not buy their bread and the necessaries of life so cheaply as they were sold in other countries. Whilst our workmen had to pay 9d. for a loaf that was to be purchased for 5d. or 6d. on the continent, and while he had to pay more than half for tax on his tobacco, tea, and beer, and one-third tax on the little sugar he could obtain, he was unable to live so cheaply as those in other countries who had not such heavy imposts to pay,

He was not able to say how far the pressure of taxes bore upon agricultural labourers, but doubtless, with their very limited wages, they could not spare money for scarcely any other object than for the necessities of life. There was one feature in the existing distress, as it affected the commerce and manufactures of the country, which was, that distress had fallen upon the shopkeeper and the master manufacturer, on whom it pressed almost as severely as it had done, and then did, upon the workmen. He would read to the House some letters which had been transmitted to him from several of his constituents, showing how prevailing the distress of trade was in the borough of Birmingham:—

“The condition of the inhabitants of Birmingham is more deplorable than ever. Cruel mortgagees are disposing of property on which they have advanced money for less than one-third of its value, or rather, I should say, they are purchasing buildings at that rate. In consequence of trade being so bad, and levies and taxes so high, mortgagors have not been able to be punctual in the payment of interest; their property has been advertised to be sold, and no sale being practicable, a legal process has been gone through, and the property been transferred from the legitimate owner to the mortgagee, and this has been the case lately in a great many instances. Trade is daily getting worse. Whilst the number of bankrupts is less, the number of insolvents is greater, in all the manufacturing districts, and the poor debtors are crying ‘make room, the prison is too small for us.’ This was actually the case in Birmingham only a few weeks ago, when the commissioners held a Court for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors, and those miserable men have been sent forth into the world penniless, and nothing but an alteration in trade can prevent their coming to the workhouse. Although it was so recently emptied of its inmates, there is a fresh succession of unfortunate debtors, many of whom have lived respectably, and contributed largely to the payment of taxes and poor-rates, to the benefit of the community, but who are now about to perish in obscurity. Tradesmen, with very few exceptions, are in jeopardy every hour. They apply to the pawnbrokers in vain, for these have granted loans till they have no money to lend, and the consequence is, all the heads of families are in ill health, and medicine is of no avail. ‘Hope deferred maketh the heart sick,’ and one need not be skilled in physiognomy to be able to discern, by a man’s countenance, that he considers himself standing on a quicksand, and, unless he has unexpectedly supported, that he must shortly sink.”

The working classes, too, as might be

expected, when the manufacturers were going to decay, were sustaining a most painful degree of suffering, and the description of those unfortunate persons who had recourse to the aid of the pawnbroker is truly affecting. He would read a statement to the House which had been made to him on the subject. The hon. Member here read the following documents, in order to prove the distressed state of various parts of the country:—

“A list of one week’s pledges at one shop, containing sixty-five pledges, out of which only two lots exceeded 3s. each. Upwards of thirty pledges are gowns, shifts, women’s petticoats, and children’s frocks; the rest are shawls, men’s waistcoats, and jackets, a bed-cover, a pillow, a wedding ring, and other small articles, the whole averaging only 1s. 9d. each in value.

“Birmingham contains ninety-four pawnbrokers, and if each has sixty-five pledges per week, the weekly number of the town, of small pledges, not exceeding 3s. each, exceeds 6,000.”

A former statement sent him shewed that the master manufacturers had so many goods in pawn, already, that the pawnbrokers are unable to find further money to advance upon them. As an instance of the great distress in Birmingham, he would refer to a letter that had been written to a Clergyman of that town:—

“A week has passed, and you have vouchsafed us no reply. Nine weeks have gone since the Committee concluded its labours, reporting, that they had found above 40,000 individuals so miserable as to be grateful—yes, humbly grateful—for a donation of less than 1½d. per head per week. Nine weeks have passed since that report; trade during that period has actually grown worse, and nothing has been done! no attempt has been made to relieve!

“We pray you to consider how ill such poverty brooks delay; how many miseries and anxieties, crowding in each successive hour, have made each week an age. Some victims of our neglect have, in that period, found refuge in the grave. No ministration of earthly comfort soothed their last mortal agony: the aid, for which affection yearned, a necessitous poverty denied—they rest—but, to the living is left the undying regret—that the thousand appliances which might have restored health, or softened pain, were all denied.

“The productions of every climate, tributary to our industry, and plastic to our skill, fill every store with the means of enjoyment, and yet, English poverty is as unequalled as English wealth.

“Workmen, with large families, are receiving from six to eleven shillings per week, and



would be able, if they could work full time, to earn from 15s. to 30s. per week. How these families live and pay rent can only be answered by the poor creatures themselves. I know they are obliged to crowd together in dwellings not fit for hogs to litter in. I know places called Chambers, wherein different families of both sexes, and of all ages, are compelled to pass the night at the same time. Is not this enough to make Chartists? Is not this enough to demoralize the people?

"At the Board of Guardians, yesterday, a young woman applied for relief, whose husband had been three weeks in prison for a debt due for provisions; he has nine weeks longer to remain; himself and his wife are steady people; they have two small children. The Guardians thought the woman appeared almost lost for want: they allowed her three shillings, and two loaves, per week, for nine weeks—not sufficient, after paying for lodgings, to keep body and soul together! more could not be allowed to her, as levies are so high, and many persons who pay them stand in need of parochial relief.

"Last week a young wife died in childbirth; her time was come, but, for want of strength, she was not able to bring forth—a physician was called in but his assistance was unavailing—he said, he had no doubt her death was occasioned by deficiency of nourishment."

An hon. Baronet lately said to him (Mr. Scholefield) that he had never been paid his rents better than at present. He (Mr. Scholefield) replied that profit to the merchant and manufacturer was the same as rent to the landlord, and he assured the worthy Baronet that profit had long fled from the tradesman. He was told that no sooner was a farm vacant than a tenant applied for it. How different was the situation of the owner of dwelling houses and manufactories, too many of which were empty and profitless to their owners! He would remind the House of an entire new state of things with regard to the conduct of persons constituting public meetings. They, too, had their motions of "no confidence" in either party. They disliked both Whig and Tory equally, but would prefer voting for the Tory now, and would doubtless duly reject them when their own proper time came. At a recent meeting at Birmingham, a resolution was passed not to vote for the abolition of the Corn-laws. The majority preferred a very different measure; they considered the Corn-law question delusive, and would be satisfied with nothing less than universal suffrage. Exactly similar was the result of a meeting at Sheffield, at which the "no confidence" in either party was the prevail-

ing feeling. A meeting had recently taken place at Liverpool, which proved how well informed the persons were who were present on the occasion: a working man of the name of Jones addressed the meeting in a manner which testified strong sense and showed how much he felt the hardship of the severe suffering himself and persons of his class were subject to from (as he said) the oppressive effects of the Corn-laws. What Mr. Jones spoke was so much to the purpose that he should take the liberty to read it to the House:—

"At a late meeting at Liverpool of the working classes, the chairman said, that the next speaker, Robert Jones, though a man well able to express his views on this great question, was unable to read, and he, the chairman, would therefore move the resolution for him: 'That these laws, which wring from the wants of the poor, in order to support a monopoly to the wealthy, are cruel, unchristian, and unjust; alike opposed to the word of God and the happiness of man.' Robert Jones, in moving the adoption of this resolution, said, that like some hundreds, if not thousands, of those present, all the property that he had in the world he had with him—all the estate that God and his father had left him on the earth, and that English landlords would allow him, he held up to them (holding up his hands). These were all his property, and he found that, in consequence of the Corn-laws and other wicked laws, he was robbed of so much of the produce of his estate that he and his children had to rise many a time from the table with half-filled bellies. This was not a cause of party or faction, it was the cause of the whole human family—it was the cause of justice and truth, of God and of humanity. A tax upon bread; a tax upon life itself—a tax upon the very existence of the working man—a tax on Eternal Justice and on the providence of God! God sent untaxed rain to water the earth; God brought untaxed corn out of the earth; God had spread a bountiful table for the whole family of man on the face of the earth—but man put his avaricious hand on the bread, and snatched it from the hungry lips of the people of England."

It had been said, that poverty had made philosophers of the suffering artisans, and the speech of Mr. Jones proves how intelligent an uneducated man may be. To show how general is the interest felt by all classes and sexes, he would mention the petition from 450 females of Bridgenorth, presented by his hon. Friend the Member for Ludlow, describing the severe distress which their husbands, fathers, sons, and brothers were undergoing from want of employment and low wages. How great is the contrast between the splendid ap-

pearance which Hyde-park, Regent's park and street, and such like places of fashionable resort, and the miserable abodes of the distressed manufacturers! Truly was it said by the writer of the letter to the Rev. Mr. Garbett of Birmingham, "English wealth is as unequalled as is English poverty." How just was the observation! how painful the reflection that arose from it! The question which naturally presented itself in considering this striking contrast of splendour and the most squalid misery was, what remedy can be applied to so mighty an evil? Doubtless, where wealth was so abundant as in this country, it would be no difficult matter to spare out of their superfluity rather than require a portion of the poor man's means of existence to be taken from him. A property tax would relieve this cruel oppression upon those who are unable, under their great privations, to pay taxes at all. This would at once be an act of justice and of mercy. He had been told, that the present motion could lead to no practical good; but he felt satisfied that, if it excited an expression of sympathy for the poor sufferers, it would not be without its use: if it did no more than keep hope alive in the breast of the afflicted, it would at least do some good. He should conclude by moving

"That the extreme suffering of the industrious classes, from want of employment, low wages, and high prices of provisions, renders it the imperative duty of Parliament to devise means for the alleviation of the great misery which now pervades all the manufacturing districts of the country."

Mr. *Williams* seconded the motion. He did not intend to have spoken, but being well aware of the prevailing distress, although no practical benefit could result from the motion with the present prospects of the House, he could not refrain from giving it his support. The cause of the existing destitute condition of the lower orders, and especially of the manufacturing classes, was the excessive burden of taxation they were compelled to sustain. They were taxed by the State, and they were taxed also by the landed aristocracy to an amount very nearly equal to the taxation imposed by the State. He had himself been an astonished witness of the rapid progress of manufactures in some parts of Europe, and the same remark would apply to America. He could not, there-

fore, help looking forward with great apprehension to the competition to which this country might in a short time be exposed. Unless something were speedily done to relieve the lower orders from the load under which they now groaned, it would be impossible for them to contend against the manufactures of foreign countries. In Switzerland, the greater part of Germany, and in the United States, the price of provisions and the other necessities of life was scarcely half as much as in Great Britain. A great change was inevitable; but when he saw the late proposition of Government for the relief of the people as regarded sugar and corn rejected by the House, what hope could he have of any benefit proceeding from such a source? He had shown, on a former occasion, that in Switzerland, Germany, and the United States, in the article of sugar only, the inhabitants paid 100 per cent. less than the inhabitants of this country. The recent decision of the House had convinced the people that nothing was to be hoped from it: discontent was, therefore, increasing in every quarter amongst those who were unable to procure even the bare necessities of life. Something must be done to improve the condition of the millions of the working classes, or property and the valuable institutions of the country would be endangered. Most of the historians of the time attributed the first French revolution to the undue pressure of taxation, because the aristocracy relieved themselves at the expense of those who were much worse able to sustain the burden. The present state of taxation in this country was much the same. Of the fifty-two millions raised by taxes, not far from the whole was obtained from the middling and industrious classes. True it was, that the higher orders paid taxes upon certain articles, but in many instances, from 100 to 200 per cent. less than was paid upon the articles by the lower orders. The reason was, that taxation was regulated, not by the value, but by the quality of the article taxed, and the aristocracy having the power of making the laws, took care to exempt itself from the chief part of the weight. Moreover, the tax paid to the landowners upon corn only, was much larger than the whole amount of taxes those landowners contributed to the State. He had felt it necessary to make these few remarks, but he was aware that the House was not disposed to treat the



matter with that seriousness which its importance demanded.

The question having been put,

Mr. *Hindley*: Mr. Speaker, It is because I agree in the opinion expressed by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Williams) that the resolution of my hon. Friend, the Member for Birmingham, is not sufficiently practical, that I am anxious to propose the addition of which I have given notice. For, Sir, if the distress at present existing arises from no fault of this House, however warmly we may express our sympathy with the industrious classes, it will be useless, if we cannot by legislation, give them some relief. Believing, however, that much of this distress arises from the present system of legislation, I am desirous to have the proposition I have advanced, adopted by the House. And though this addition itself embraces no practical details, it appears to me that its adoption by the House at the present time would have a practical effect. When the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Robert Peel,) proposed his motion of want of confidence in the Government, he neither proposed to address her Majesty for the removal of her Ministers, nor for the exercise of her prerogative of dissolving this House, though it was certain, that one or the other of these results must follow his motion, if successful. In the same way, I conceive that if the House adopt my addition, the practical result must be a revision of the whole of our taxation, whatever party may be in office. Sir, there are two great parties in the State struggling for power; and I fearlessly tell them both, that it would be utterly impossible for either to hold the reins, except they act on the principle that taxation should be just to all classes of the community. The present system of taxation presses most unequally on the different classes of society, and, most unjustly on the middle and lower classes. The duty of removing this injustice at the present time is exceedingly increased by the extremely depressed state of these classes. The House has heard the melancholy and lengthened details of the hon. Member for Birmingham; and it is unnecessary for me to do more than to confirm their truth from my own personal knowledge. Representing as I do, an extensive manufacturing district, and intimately acquainted, as I am, with the state of the labouring classes, I must say, that

never within the period of my recollection, have I witnessed such severe and such general distress. I may be allowed to add one fact in proof of the extreme depression which prevails in trade, that the cotton-mill property near Manchester, alluded to the other night by my hon. Friend the Member for Salford, (Mr. Brotherton), which originally cost one hundred and twenty thousand pounds has, since that debate been sold for twenty-six thousand pounds! Sir, I am not about to complain at present of the amount of taxation, although that is excessive, so much as of the unequal manner in which it is levied. The Government of the country cannot be considered in a state of safety as long as the taxation of the country is regulated, not according to the principles of justice, but according as certain class interests preponderate, more or less, in this House. I have been much struck with a passage in the able report of "The Hand-loom Weavers' Commission," which I will venture to read to the House. Alluding to the political theories of the present day, the commissioners say,

"We feel that the state of mind which they indicate, deserves serious attention. The Government of this country resides in a minority, and a narrow minority; the owners of land, a small portion of the community, constitute, almost exclusively, one House of Parliament, and form a large majority in the other. Such a Government can be safe only while it is popular; and popular only while it is believed to be impartial. Its first prudential duty is to avoid even the appearance of selfish legislation."

Now, Sir, let us inquire how far this principle is acted upon, with reference to the middle and lower classes of society. It is well known to the House, that, in the year 1833, the late Mr. Cobbett exposed to the House and the country, the injustice occasioned by the existing stamp-duties. That injustice was admitted by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, who promised it should be remedied. Has this been done? Has any attention whatever been paid to it? No. Eight years have elapsed, and the injustice continues to the present moment. That the House may judge of the amount of this injustice, permit me to call its attention to some particulars of the various stamp-duties. The rate of duty upon a conveyance of property of ten pounds value, is ten per cent.; while it is only one per cent. on a con-

veyance of property of two thousand pounds value! The rate of duty on mortgages is ten pounds per cent. upon the raising of ten pounds; whilst it is only six shillings per cent. on a loan of two thousand pounds, and sixpence per cent. only upon a mortgage of one hundred thousand pounds! And the low amount of stamp-duty upon large mortgages, as compared with that upon large conveyances, cannot but excite a suspicion that this had been purposely done by the landed Gentlemen, who rarely sell their property, but who, from family engagements and other causes, have frequently to raise money upon it. The stamp-duty on bills of a low amount, say, twenty pounds, is ten shillings per cent.; on ten thousand pounds, it is threepence-halfpenny per cent.; and three-fourths of the amount of stamp-duty on bills, is raised from bills averaging seventy-five pounds. Can anything, Sir, show more clearly the unequal pressure borne, in this particular, by small tradesmen? The same remark applies to the stamp duty on receipts, which is five shillings per cent. upon ten pounds, and five farthings per cent. on ten thousand pounds! It appears, therefore, that the man who sells ten pounds worth of property, pays, on the conveyance, ten times as much in proportion as the man who sells one hundred thousand; that the man who borrows on mortgage ten pounds, pays four hundred times as much in proportion as the man who borrows one hundred thousand pounds; and that the man who gives his bill or receipt for ten pounds, pays four hundred and eighty times as much in proportion as he who gives his bill or receipt for one hundred thousand pounds! These are but specimens of similar unjust disproportions in stamp duties, on annuities, insurances, probates, auctions, &c., &c. Nor is the injustice committed by the present system of taxation less on the lower than on the middle classes. And, allow me to remind hon. Members, that this portion of the community is not represented in this House. Out of five millions of the adult male population, four millions have no votes. I am not now going to inquire into the justice or injustice of keeping this majority of our fellow-countrymen out of the pale of the constitution, however strong my opinion upon this point may be; but I do call upon hon. Members to admit, that the fact of their not being represented

in this House, renders it doubly the duty of the House to be careful not to do them injustice. If the House takes advantage of its power, to draw more in proportion out of their pockets than out of the pockets of other classes, it adds injustice to insult, and inflicts upon them a double wrong. Now, how stands the fact? If, Sir, I were to ask hon. Members, individually, whether the shilling of the poor man ought to go as far as the shilling of the rich man, I am sure every hon. Gentleman would answer in the affirmative; and that, if there should be any difference, it ought to be in favour of the poor; and I cannot believe, that the House, collectively, would express a different opinion. I feel persuaded that hon. Members are not aware of the extent of the injustice done to the lower classes, by the present system of taxation. In order to give a practical illustration of this injustice, I have furnished myself with a statement which I requested a highly respectable grocer in this city to prepare, of the various articles he is in the habit of supplying to rich and poor families, with the prices of those articles, and the rates of duty on each. I confess that I read the statement with much surprise, in which I think the House will participate; but, after a careful examination, I cannot discover that its truth can be invalidated. He writes,

"A poor woman, a widow, earning her living by washing for families at their own abodes, and having two young children to support, generally purchases, weekly, the following articles, and this is about the usual proportion which poor persons of that class consume in a week;—

	s.	d.	Duty out of	s.	d.
8 oz. of tea, at 4s. per lb.	0	6	which is	0	3½
1 lb. of sugar	0	6	do.	0	2½
8 oz. of coffee, 1s. 8d. per lb.	0	2½	do.	0	1
1 oz. of pepper, occasionally	0	1	do.	0	1
1 lb. of raisins	0	4	do.	0	1½
Total	1	7½		0	8½

Being at the rate of 44 per cent., or 5½d. out of every shilling. The same kind of articles supplied to persons of the higher classes would be as follows;—

	s.	d.	Duty out of	s.	d.
1 lb. of tea	8	0	which is	8	3½
1 lb. of the best sugar	1	2	do.	0	3
1 lb. of coffee	2	6	do.	0	8
1 lb. of Muscatel raisins	1	6	do.	0	1½
1 lb. of white pepper	3	0	do.	0	6
Total	16	8		3	8½

Being about 23 per cent, or 2½d in every 1s.

So that the House will perceive, that when the poor woman places her shilling upon the counter of the grocer she

receives back 6½d. worth of goods, and the Government takes the remaining 5½d. When the rich man pays his shilling to the same grocer for the same description of articles, he receives 9½d. in goods, which is almost half as much again as the poor woman receives, the State being content with 2½d. out of his shilling, though it had just before taken 5½d. out of hers. And the evil does not end here, for the grocer is obliged to have a profit on the extra capital which the duty requires him to employ. This disproportion in taxation is a state of things not to be endured; and, until a change be made, there can be no safety for the State. It is all very well to talk about Charism, or any other symptom of discontent with the present state of things, but they are the inevitable consequences of the wrongs inflicted upon the masses. Let justice be done to the lower orders, and there will be nothing to fear. But of all the injustice which is committed on the labouring classes, that caused by the Corn-laws I hold to be the greatest. It is not my intention to enter into the whole of the argument on this question, or in any way to interfere with my hon. Friend, the Member for Wolverhampton, (Mr. Villiers,) whose zeal, ability, and discretion, in its management, entitle him to the highest praise. But I cannot let the Session close without expressing my opinion upon the subject, seeing how the expected debate in this House was cushioned by the motion of the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Robert Peel) which motion was obviously brought on for that purpose; and also, because I see the most assiduous efforts are made out of doors to impress the working classes, that they are not interested in the repeal of these laws. I deeply regret that the expected debate did not come on in this House. I had hoped, that even after the debate on the motion of the right hon. Baronet, it would have been in the power of the Government to bring forward the question. On more mature consideration, however, I felt convinced that they ought to enter on no new business, but appeal to the country at the earliest possible period. I do think, however, that it would have been much better that the discussion should have taken place here, than out of doors. In this House, error would have been corrected; falsehood refuted; exaggeration reduced to fact; misrepresentation exposed; and the truth, elicited by the collision of facts

and opinions, would have been prominently placed before the country. But now exertions of the strongest description are being made out of doors to inflame the public mind by gross exaggerations and ex-parte statements. Amongst these efforts perhaps the greatest is, to make the labouring classes believe, that they are in no way interested in an alteration of the present Corn-laws. A greater fallacy was never attempted to be palmed upon them; and I have too much faith in their good sense, to believe, that such an assertion could have any weight with them whatever. I think one of the greatest advantages to be derived from an alteration in the present system, would be steadiness in price. It is evident, that the more you extend the field of production, the more likely are you to have steadiness of prices. If, for instance, you confine your production of wheat solely to the county of Buckingham, there would be great unsteadiness of prices. In the same manner, if the production were limited to light soils, in some years the produce would be small, in consequence of bad seasons; whilst, in the same way, if its production were limited to heavy soils, the same result would follow. Whereas, by adopting all soils, all climates, and all countries, you secure the bounties of Providence to the utmost possible extent. The advantage to the labourer of steadiness of price can scarcely be fully appreciated. If he buy bread one year at 1½d. per lb., and another year at 2d., and a third at 2½d., it signifies not, to tell him that the average price has been 2d.; for the effect upon his comforts and habits has been very injurious. With such fluctuation in the price of the main necessary of life, it is utterly impossible, Sir, that you can ever expect the labourer to be prudent and thrifty, because it is out of his power properly to accommodate his expenditure to his fluctuating income. In order to exhibit to the House the intimate connection which exists between the prosperity of the manufacturing population and a moderate price of corn, I beg leave to read to the House some statements which I have prepared from my own practical knowledge as a man of business. In the years 1817, 1818, and 1819, the prices of wheat were 84s. 9d., 84s. 1d., and 73s. per quarter, and trade was in a deplorable condition. In 1821, 1822, and 1823, the prices were, 56s. 2d., 44s. 7d., 53s. 5d., per quarter, and trade was good. In 1829, and 1830,

the prices were 66s. 3d., and 64s. 3d. per quarter, and trade was again depressed. In 1833, 1834, and 1835, the prices were low, varying from 52s. 11d. to 39s. 4d., and trade was extremely flourishing. In 1838, 1839, and 1840, prices were 64s. 7d., 70s. 8d., and 66s. 4d. per quarter; and I need not tell the House how deplorable was the state of trade. It is not to be wondered at, that these were the results of the fluctuations in the price of corn. I have obtained an account of the expenditure of a man and his family, in London, whose weekly wages amount to 20s. Of this amount 8s. 6d. are expended in bread and meat; 2s. 6d. in grocery; 1s. in butter; 1s. in vegetables; 1s. 3d. in beer; 3s. in rent; and 2s. 9d. only in clothing. But, if the price of food rises beyond the ordinary level, he is unable to spend even this sum, and the demand for manufactures falls off to the extent of the advance. I need not tell the House how large a sum this would make in the aggregate of all the labourers in the kingdom. But the evil of the manufacturing labourer does not end here; not only is he unable to spend the ordinary sum in clothing—not only does he suffer from the diminished demand of the rest of the community, in consequence of the high price of food, but he is frequently unable to obtain any employment. Every manufacturer is intent on reducing his expenses by doing away with all superfluous hands. He couples his spinning-wheels, improves his machinery, and takes every possible means of lessening the number of persons in his employ. Thus a large number are thrown out of work, and are obliged to depend on the precarious subsistence furnished by charity. Individuals have frequently applied to me in a most distressed condition, stating that they had been discharged from their employ in consequence of these circumstances; and many instances I could name in which the parties had been twenty-four hours without tasting bread. Now, if a regular importation of corn were allowed, many of these evils would be removed, and many of the temporary inconveniences arising from the improvements in machinery alleviated. It is unjust that the labourer should be prevented from exchanging his productions for the corn of other countries; and I fully believe, that an alteration of the Corn-laws will effect that which all must have in view; namely, the maintenance of the people of this

country in a state of comfort and independence, instead of the deplorable condition to which numbers are reduced. One word as to the condition of the agricultural labourer. The demand for his labour is necessarily limited by the fact, that land is incapable of enlargement. The census of 1831 showed a diminution of upwards of thirty-five thousand persons employed in agriculture. My opinion is, that the census of the present year will show a similar result. It becomes the landed Gentlemen, then, seriously to consider what is to be done with the surplus population of the agricultural districts. The evil arising therefrom led to the passing of the present Poor-law; a measure which was certainly intended to raise and improve the value of land, and it has had that effect. But I candidly declare to the House my firm conviction, that had it not been for the large expenditure occasioned by the formation of railways, which have absorbed the unemployed agricultural labourers, it would have been impossible to have carried into effect this harsh and oppressive measure. But, when the forty millions of capital raised by the railway companies, which by the way has all been derived from the manufacturing and commercial interests, and the expenditure of which will prove so beneficial to the landed interest,—I ask, when all this capital has been expended, what do you intend to do with the surplus agricultural population? Do you intend to have another migration scheme, by which you may transport them from Buckinghamshire to Lancashire? I tell you, there is not, and will not be any employment for them there, because you will not suffer the produce of Lancashire labour to be freely exchanged for the produce of other countries. Sir, I have always considered that the Poor-law ought to be viewed in connection with the Corn-law. To punish poverty as a crime, is at all times unjust; but to punish it after it has been caused by your own legislation, resembles the tying of a man's hands behind his back, and then whipping him because he does not earn his own subsistence. I think that the country has a right to know from the right hon. Baronet (Sir Robert Peel,) whether he intends to continue the present Poor-law—the restrictions on trade—and whether he intends to abide by the present Corn-laws? The right hon. Baronet, whom I am sorry not now to see in his place, should tell the

House whether he is encouraging Sir George Murray at Manchester in advocating a fixed duty, or his agricultural supporters in the counties in their adherence to the present Corn-laws. In his absence, perhaps, the right hon. Baronet, (Sir James Graham,) who is no doubt in his confidence, will inform the House of his intention on these subjects. For my own part, I will say sincerely, that if the right hon. Baronet should come into power, and will bring forward measures in conformity with the views which I have stated to-night, however much I might oppose him on measures of a less liberal character, on these he shall have my decided support. It was said the other night, that party spirit was beneficial to the country, and the right hon. Baronet, quoting from a book published by the noble Lord, said "that the collision of party gave vigour to the constitution." With this sentiment I cannot agree; for in the heat of party, hon. Gentlemen are too apt to forget that they are natives of the same land, and ought to endeavour to promote the common good of their fellow-countrymen. I call upon hon. Members to forsake and forget party strife, and to let the love of their country prevail over every selfish feeling, making it their constant aim to promote the happiness and well being of the great body of the people. From the terms of the motion, I have spoken chiefly of the labouring classes of the community. I have said little of those who have hazarded great stakes in the manufactures of the country. One word, however, I will add respecting them. You may, by a bad course of legislation, involve these individuals in ruin; you may diminish the value of their property; you may cripple and destroy the trade and manufactures of the country; but who will suffer in the end? The burden of supporting an unemployed and impoverished population must eventually fall on the land. The agriculturists will become chargeable with their maintenance; and neither by your Poor-laws, nor your schemes of migration, or emigration, will you be able to save yourselves from falling under the burden of supporting the suffering masses around you.

Sir F. Burdett said, that after the long and discursive speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, he should certainly endeavour to condense what little he had to address to the House, into the

smallest compass possible. The hon. Member for Birmingham seemed to him to have proposed a motion, which could have no other object but that of being a mere vehicle for the expression of his own peculiar views and sentiments with respect to the distressed portion of the population of this country; and he must confess that he concurred in those expressions of sympathy, and he believed that every man, in and out of the House, lamented the existence of that distress as much as the hon. Member himself. But all that could be said in reply to them was, "Will you point out the means by which that distress can be removed? Will you offer some remedy, or some suggestion by which the House may be led to guess at a remedy for the evils complained of?" While, however, he was quite willing to join the hon. Member in his expressions of regret at the condition of the poor, inasmuch as it might afford some consolation to those, at least, who thought that their grievances might be redressed, if the attention of Parliament were directed towards them; and while, in that view of the subject, he might express his readiness to agree with the motion of the hon. Member for Birmingham, still he thought he had some reason to complain of the practice of hon. Members coming down to the House, and delivering speeches generally containing unfounded insinuations against the upper classes of society, and making it appear, that landlords, and proprietors of large estates were bloodsuckers of the poor, and persons devoid of all feeling, living upon that which was unjustly taken away from the produce of the labour of the lower classes. He deprecated the fashion, too, of citing, as the hon. Member had done, cases of which it was impossible to know anything at the moment, and repeating calculations which could not at once be examined and tested, and of giving a colour to those sentiments which persons, calling themselves Chartists, had put forth in their petitions, in which they demanded of the House whatever they thought themselves entitled to. He thought it would be much better for the hon. Gentleman to bring forward some distinct proposition for the appointment of a committee, to inquire into the truth of all those allegations and computations, in order that it might be ascertained, beyond a doubt, which were facts, and which were not, and how far it was in the power of the House

to devise means of relief. But as the hon. Gentleman had not done so, and as his motion was something like the dying recommendation of a person whose conscience smites him to some friend, to do an act of justice or of benevolence, he could only express his anxious wish that the attention of the House should be turned to these subjects after the approaching elections. Even then, however, it could only be done by bringing a proper and definite motion before the House. The hon. Member for Ashton-under-Line seemed to have brought the question into the narrowest compass, because he had stated, that all the evils which he mentioned were owing to the present system of taxation and the corn laws. How far he had made out the truth of that assertion, he would not pretend to say; but still the subject was worthy of consideration. He did not believe that taxation was unjustly laid upon any one class of society more than another. But if it could be shown that such was the case, then the whole complicated system of taxation ought to be inquired into, and it might, perhaps, be found to be capable of great amelioration, even while means were adopted for producing a considerable saving to the country. But these were matters which should not be mixed up with the corn laws. That, however, seemed to be the whole purpose and gist of the discussion; the object appeared to be, to make the corn laws assume a mighty importance, which did not properly belong to them, by connecting them with what was called the regulations of our national trade and commerce. One single fact showed the effect of the present protection of corn. Within the last three years, more corn had been imported into this country from abroad, than was imported previously to the passing of the corn laws in 1815, before which year there had been a free trade in corn for twenty years at least. From public statements which he had seen, it appeared that 3,800,000 quarters of corn had been imported, so that the foreign corn trade, instead of being diminished, had actually increased. He was surprised to hear it repeatedly asserted, that the distress of the manufacturing districts was to be ascribed to the corn laws; it was almost as absurd a declaration as the saying which was attributed to some of the people of Kent, that the formation of the Goodwin Sands was caused by

the erection of Tenterden church. Nothing could be a greater delusion than to suppose that the corn laws were the cause of the present distress among the manufacturing population, and that they were beneficial to none but landed proprietors. If hon. Gentlemen would know the causes of that distress, let them look elsewhere; let them look at the manner in which our commercial interests had been neglected for a long time; let them remember how foreign markets had been lost to this country, by the neglect of the Government, and their heedless mode of making treaties. To that cause must be attributed the loss of all the trade we formerly carried on in Poland, and in central Asia, by the interdictions of Russia, which he maintained had no right to interdict our commerce. The monstrous fallacy, that to the existence of the corn laws must be ascribed all the mischiefs that had been depicted by the hon. Members who had just addressed the House, could only have been invented for the purpose of creating ill-will between the agricultural and manufacturing interests, and to set them contending with each other. It could be for no other purpose, unless indeed it were intended to influence public elections, and to serve party designs. But he did not believe that the manufacturing classes were so insensible as not to feel that the agricultural interest was their main prop and support. The agricultural interest was the parent of every other interest; without it there could be no other interest. Out of the agricultural interest all the ramifications of trade and commerce originally sprang; for by reverting back to a state of nature it would be clear at once that agriculture must be the preceding cause and source of all other kinds of wealth and employment. It was putting the cart before the horse to say the reverse, to say that agriculture sprang out of manufactures, and must be secondary and subservient to them; whereas, the truth was, that manufactures and commerce were superinduced by agriculture, and were very greatly improved and promoted by it. He knew not what notions might be entertained by certain political economists of the present day upon the value of our agriculture in a national point of view, but of this he was sure, that the landed interest was the only stable, the only substantial interest of the country. It resembled the tortoise in the

fable, that supported the elephant which sustained the world; it was at the bottom, and was the foundation and support of all, and to its influence and existence might be attributed the prosperity that had attended the country for so many years. The arts, the sciences, our manufactures, and everything that adorned and cheered human society, might be said to have originated in that source, and if you cut up that interest, all other interests must fall with it. The home trade of the land arising out of the transit and purchase of agricultural produce, that eternal interchange between town and country, was the channel and food, as it were, of our manufacturing interest amongst our own population; and so it was with regard to foreign trade, for though we had been deprived of many markets abroad of which we had been long possessed, it could not be said that the corn trade had deprived us of them. It was pretty clear that such an assertion was not true, from the fact that higher duties were fixed for the prohibition of trade in several instances than for the protection of corn; and after all, he must say, that he thought the duty on corn was little or no protection. The real subject in debate, however, was not the Corn-laws, but the existence of the Ministry. That was the question; the Government were put to their last shift, and the Corn-laws were seized hold of to create a mistaken feeling in their favour; but the agitation and the object of it would alike prove to be nothing better than an empty bubble. Attempts were made to excite the public mind by calling the duty on corn a bread-tax, and the agricultural interest a monopoly. In the first place, the duty could not be a bread-tax, because it was not a tax paid by the consumer; the foreign merchant, by bringing corn to this country, did not raise the price of corn, but he paid the amount of duty necessary to bring it up to the market price here, because it would not be admitted under that sum. Therefore it was not a tax paid by the consumer but by the importer. [Hear]. He should be very happy to hear those hon. Gentlemen who cheered him, show by sound arguments, that the protection given to agriculture was the cause of all the distresses experienced by the manufacturing classes. He should be glad to hear them show how it was dependant upon the importation, or non-

importation of foreign corn. He must say, that he thought it impossible that the abolition of the Corn-laws should remedy the distresses of the manufacturing and commercial community. If a free trade of any kind must be established, it should not be done without first having a review of the whole commercial state of the country. He was one of those persons who were convinced that much advantage would result from free trade. But then he would have free-trade established under those wise provisions which had been suggested to the House by the right hon. Baronet, who declared himself no enemy to free trade. The truth was, that we had been going on with prohibitions and restrictions upon trade, and, most absurdly for a manufacturing country, with heavy duties upon raw materials. Whatever his own views upon this point were, representing a large agricultural district, he should feel it his duty on a subject which his constituents felt to be of vital importance to them, not to vote against their wishes. He remembered that when he was Member for Westminster, he could not convince the shopkeepers that they did not pay the shop-tax, but their customers; and he was not surprised to find that it was equally difficult to make some people see the real operation of the Corn-laws. He protested against this subject being made the ground of political warfare; if hon. Gentleman sincerely desired to promote the welfare of the country, let them approach this question in a calm and dispassionate manner. Let not those on one side say, "O you are a monopolist, because you think the Corn-laws ought to be continued;" nor let those on the other retort, "You are a very fine liberal fellow because you think otherwise." Instead of all that heat and animosity which was shown, and which it was attempted to spread far and wide, but unsuccessfully, as he believed, this was a question which should be treated with the greatest coolness and deliberation, and was one upon which, of all others, any Ministers, be they whom they might, ought not to endeavour to excite the popular feeling in the least degree. Therefore he sincerely thought that in doing so the present Ministers had incurred a very great responsibility, and that under all the circumstances it was not at all impossible that some day or other they would have cause to repent it.

Mr. Labouchere observed, that when

the hon. Baronet rose, he was anxious to hear his sentiments upon matters of trade, knowing that he had not spoken upon such subjects in that House for many years, and recollecting what the hon. Baronet's opinions were when he represented Westminster. At that time he declared himself the uncompromising opponent of those who supported the Corn-laws; for he was then a disciple of the free trade school, and prepared to go any lengths for the promotion of free trade principles. The hon. Baronet, however, had gratified his curiosity but very little; after listening to the hon. Baronet with that attention which he always deserved and obtained, he was at a loss to understand what were the hon. Baronet's present opinions. The hon. Baronet had said, that these were not matters of mere abstract opinion; that he represented Wiltshire, and that therefore he must qualify his views by the feelings of his constituents; he gave one-half of his speech to his former constituents, and the other half to his present, and, though he did not divide his speech into two equal parts, he gave sentence by sentence, one for, and the other against protection. But, whatever the hon. Baronet's opinions might be upon the Corn-laws, it was a new thing to hear it said that they were a subject of little importance. "Why raise a flame about the Corn-laws?" exclaimed the hon. Baronet, "it cannot affect you much—it cannot affect the manufacturing interest much—and, in fact, it does not even affect the agricultural interest." That was an extraordinary doctrine; he had always thought the Corn-law question was generally acknowledged to be a most important question to this country. He agreed with the hon. Baronet that it would be a partial proceeding to deal with one branch of trade, and not to apply the principle to all the branches of our commerce which required correction; and that was the very course which was contemplated by her Majesty's Government, for they had brought forward a series of improvements in the corn, the timber, and the sugar trades, and the alterations which they proposed were not rashly, or recklessly, or unpremeditatedly, resolved upon, as had been imputed to them, but upon mature deliberation, and whether right or wrong the measures they had advanced had originated in an earnest desire to do justice to the community, and to promote the welfare of the coun-

try. He therefore boldly repelled the accusation that those measures were brought forward for party purposes, and without any real wish to have them carried. For six weeks or two months previously to bringing forward the budget, his room at the Board of Trade had been crowded with deputations from all parts of the great manufacturing districts, representing the necessity of some such changes as had been proposed by her Majesty's Government, and he was quite satisfied that if those alterations had been received by the House as they deserved, this Session would not have closed without measures being carried of more importance for the benefit of the public generally, than it would be possible to carry in ten Sessions spent in mere party struggles, when measures of general political advantage and amelioration might be passed without adding much to the comfort and well-being of the population. With regard to the motion of the hon. Member for Birmingham, he (Mr. Labouchere) fully agreed with the terms of that motion; the facts stated therein formed the justification of the late measures of the Government; and he also agreed with the hon. Member, that in part at least, the prevalent distress might be removed by wise legislative measures; but he must say, that he doubted the wisdom of affirming a proposition of this kind, especially at this period of the Session; and he would put it to the hon. Member whether he thought that full justice could be done to a subject of this kind when so many Members were absent, and so little time remained to investigate it. He had also another objection to the motion; he had a general objection to affirming a general resolution of this kind in the House of Commons, unaccompanied with any steps of a practical kind. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member would not press this motion to a division. For his own part, notwithstanding the result of bringing forward the measures which had been proposed by the Government, he did not regret that they had been brought forward. He was convinced, that it was the duty of her Majesty's Government to lay these measures before the House, whatever might be the result and effect with respect to them as a Government, and as a party. As President of the Board of Trade, he could not have sat upon the Treasury bench or risen up



in the House, he should have felt it too humiliating, if these measures had not been proposed, knowing as he did, from the representations that had been made to him in his official situation, that according to the representations of practical men, the Government had it in their power to relieve the prevalent distress by means of legislation. He therefore thought it was the indispensable duty of the Government to bring forward these measures, whatever might be the result to the party. Nevertheless he was not insensible to party ties; he had always been a warm supporter of that great liberal party whom he had seen during the last ten years bringing forward measures of incalculable benefit to the country. He did not know what might be the immediate result; but he was certain, that having brought forward the measures to which he referred, her Majesty's Government had greatly assisted their final triumph. He said this with the utmost confidence, because he had never known a just and righteous cause, which, when once it was fairly brought before the people of England, the people of England did not finally carry out; and whether those measures were to be carried by the party to which he belonged, or the other, was to him of comparatively little interest.

Mr. *Baines* could not agree in the opinion of the hon. Baronet, that the discussion of the motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, would lead to no practical result. He, on the contrary, thought that a subject which involved an inquiry into the true state and condition of the great body of the people in the manufacturing and commercial districts of the country, on the eve of a dissolution of Parliament, when the constituents and representatives were to be brought together, and when inquiries could be made by the latter into the circumstances of the former, and particularly into the alleged distresses that prevailed amongst them, and as to the cause of and remedy for that distress, was of the highest importance, and would be productive of consequences more beneficial than those which belonged to most of the discussions that took place in that House. For his own part, he was accustomed to judge of public questions more from their real importance, than from the sensation they made in Parliament and by the votes which they elicited. The discussion of the ques-

tion of the extreme suffering of the industrious classes, for want of employment, low wages, and the high price of provisions, and the consideration how they were to be alleviated, was the more important, because the wishes of the people for the consideration of these subjects, particularly the price of bread and the deprivation of labour, arising out of the existing Corn-laws, had been defeated by a side wind; and it was fitting that a question of such vital importance to the nation at large should be considered in Parliament, though ever so late in the Session, and under circumstances however disadvantageous. And whoever might be Minister when the new Parliament assembled, it was proper that one of the first subjects to be brought under the consideration of the House, should be to devise means for the alleviation of the great distress and severe embarrassment which are endured by the mercantile and manufacturing classes, and by their workpeople. Upon this subject, he was prepared to speak from his own personal knowledge, as well as from the information of others, and he did not know how he could more forcibly describe the distress of the unemployed poor in that part of the country with which he had the honour to be connected, and he believed, he might say, in the manufacturing districts generally, than by a simple statement of facts, which spoke a language too plain to be misunderstood. Several months ago a number of the unemployed workmen in Leeds formed themselves into a committee, the object of which was to ascertain the condition of their fellow-workmen in the town by an actual survey, without any party object, but with the hope of exciting sympathy in the middle and higher classes of the inhabitants, and of obtaining relief for the distressed. The result of this survey and inquiry was communicated in a report to a meeting of the inhabitants called by the chief magistrate of the borough, at which almost all the ministers of religion in the town attended, and over whose deliberations the mayor presided. The following was the substance of the report:—

“The committee have entered the names of upwards of 2,000 persons, principally heads of families, varying from two to eleven in each family, and, taking five as the average, they find that there are no less than 10,000 persons (in this town) out of employment, or dependent on those who are in that situation.”

On the presentation of this report to the meeting, and after the cause of the distressed had been strongly advocated, the chairman of the committee of the unemployed addressed the meeting, and gave an account of the heart-rending scenes that he had witnessed, in visiting the dwellings of the poor:—

“In many cases which I visited,” said he, “I have heard men declare, that unless by some means their children could be supplied with bread, they should be under the necessity of taking it from the common stock. In that opinion,” said the speaker, “I myself cordially agree; for I declare before God and man I would take it where I could find it.”

These sentiments were received with applause by some of the workmen in the meeting, mixed with expressions of disapprobation from the bench.

“This language,” he continued, “may sound unpleasantly in polite ears, but let those persons come to have the naked backs and the hungry bellies that this useful class of society suffered from, and I am satisfied that they would not be contented, but that they would be amongst the first, when want pinches their stomachs, to take food where they could find it.”

Another speaker, of the name of George White, a Chartist leader, said.

“He would never tell a lie about his feelings. He would assure the meeting that the sentiments uttered by Bottomley (the chairman of the Operative committee), were held by nine out of every ten of the unemployed workmen.” He added, “It is a crime for a man to allow himself to starve in the midst of plenty.”

To relieve the distressed as far as relief could be afforded, the sum of 5,700*l.* was subscribed, and distributed principally in food. The visiting committee, in their report, dated in June last, say.

“That they had made inquiry into the circumstances of every applicant for relief, and that they found thousands of persons who were able and willing to work, but who could not find employment.”

Now, though it was undoubtedly a great exaggeration to say, that nine-tenths of the unemployed workmen were freebooters, yet their present condition had the effect of undermining the moral principles, and disaffecting them to the Government and institutions of the country; it was therefore desirable, as well for the safety of our public institutions as for the improvement of the condition of the labouring classes,

that an end should be put to this state of suffering.

Sir *Stratford Canning* said, that a question of this nature was too important to be discussed in so thin a House, and moved that the House be counted. There being only twenty-four Members present, House adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Wednesday, June 16, 1841.*

*MINUTÆ.] Bills.* Read a first time:—Loan Societies; Bills of Exchange.—Read a second time:—Court of Chancery.—Read a third time:—Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

*Petitions presented.* By Sir Matthew Wood, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Villiers, Mr. Mark Phillips, Sir De Lacy Evans, Mr. Wakley, Mr. Thomas Duncombe, Mr. Wynn Ellis, and Lord John Russell, from the City, from Derbyshire, Westmoreland, Brixton, Egham, Belfast, various Parishes in the Metropolis, Cumberland, Lancashire, Surrey, Greenwich, and a great many other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Pringle, from Kelso, and other places in Scotland, by Mr. Kemble, from places in Surrey, and by Mr. Gore, jun., from Salop, against the Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Mark Phillips, from many of the Manufacturing Districts, complaining of Distress.—By Mr. Keable, and Sir R. Inglis, from Battersea, and other places, for Church Extension.

*AMENDMENTS IMPROPERLY MADE IN BILLS.]* Lord J. Russell having moved the third reading of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners' Bill; on the question being put,

Sir *E. Sugden* said, he would take that opportunity to protest against the practice of introducing important alterations into bills at the third reading without notice to the House. Nothing could be more inconvenient. An instance had occurred the other night, in the case of the Bribery at Elections Bill, into the first clause of which words had been introduced by a member of the Government without notice, for giving the unheard-of power to the chairman of an election committee to issue his warrant to the sergeant-at-arms to commit any Member of the House to the custody of the said sergeant without bail or mainprize for any time not exceeding twenty-four hours, if the House shall be then sitting; and if not, then for a time not exceeding twenty-four hours after the hour to which the House shall then be adjourned. The words which had been introduced wholly altered the nature of the clause, and he was sure that a provision so completely objectionable could not have met the eye of the right hon. Gentleman in the chair, or he would have felt it his duty to point out to the House

the impropriety of it. However, this not having been done, the bill with the clause, objectionable as it was, was now in the House of Lords. It was only this morning that the matter had come to his knowledge, and he had felt that it was his duty to call the attention of the House to the subject.

Dr. *Nicholl* said, that he had thought, upon looking into the bill, on coming into the House on the evening it was to be read a third time, that the words were not extensive enough as they stood, and he had mentioned his doubt to the Solicitor-general, who undertook to introduce some words which he (Dr. Nicholl) suggested. But the Solicitor-general was in no way responsible for the alteration, of which he was afraid he was innocent the cause.

Lord *J. Russell* said, that when the Solicitor-general got up to move this alteration, he (Lord *J. Russell*) was not aware that any such amendment was to be made. However, from the Solicitor-general's explanation, he gathered that it was merely one of those technical amendments which might very well be made in bills at the third reading. The right hon. Gentleman would, therefore, see, that he (Lord *J. Russell*) was not to blame in the matter.

The Ecclesiastical Commissioners Bill read a third time and passed.

COURT OF CHANCERY.] On the motion of Lord *J. Russell*, the Court of Chancery Bill was read a second time.

On the question that the bill be committed,

Sir *E. Sugden* said, he very much objected to this measure. Last Session a bill had passed into a law, giving the Lord Chancellor greater power than had ever before, he believed, been conferred on an individual—legislative powers, in short, subject to the condition, that the orders which might be made in pursuance of such powers should lay on the Table of the House of Commons for thirty days; and, if not objected to, should, at the end of that time, come into operation. This was a salutary check upon these enormous powers, but this bill continued the powers while it did away with the check; it provided that the orders of the Chancellor should be law, and should come into operation immediately upon being issued, but that they should be laid on the Table, and that the House, if it pleased, might rescind them. This he thought most ob-

jectionable, but as this bill had passed the other House, although without having received that consideration (he spoke advisedly) which it ought to have had, and as it was deemed of importance by her Majesty's Government, he should not divide the House against the further progress of it. Nevertheless, he fully reserved to himself the right of objecting, as he possibly might find it his duty to do, to any orders which might be laid upon the Table in pursuance of this bill.

The Attorney General said, that the bill of last Session had not been acted upon, for the Lord Chancellor, he believed, was afraid to act upon it; because, without this bill, if under the act of last Session the Lord Chancellor had issued any order, such order, however inconvenient its operation might have turned out to be, could not have been altered in any way until it had been thirty-six sitting days before Parliament. It was thought better that there should be an opportunity for revision, alteration, and correction, and this provision in the bill had been framed accordingly.

To be committed on the following day.

NEW PROJECTILE.] Mr. *Wakley* rose, in pursuance of notice, "to inquire of Lord Viscount Ingestrie whether some experiments, said to have been witnessed by his Lordship, which were performed by Mr. Warner, to demonstrate the power and utility of certain inventions alleged to be applicable to naval and military conflicts, were correctly described in a morning journal, and in a pamphlet recently published by Mr. Walesby, the barrister." The hon. Member said, that in the month of August last, an editorial notice appeared in *The Times* journal, stating, that a discovery had been made of an enormous power, applicable to the purpose of destruction, and calculated to affect, in an extraordinary degree, the usual course of warfare on the face of the civilised globe. It was represented to have a force so vast and extraordinary, that it was difficult for those who had not examined it to believe that such a thing could exist; but at the same time, the writer of the article challenged inquiry, and gave an account of proceedings which had taken place in relation to it before his late Majesty William 4th, and also the Lords of the Admiralty. It appeared that the matter had been afterwards laid be-

fore Viscount Melbourne, who had referred it to the Lords of the Admiralty. The notice which appeared in the newspaper he had mentioned in August was followed by two or three others in September, and then the question appeared to be set at rest till the month of February in the present year, when another notice appeared, giving an account of an experiment, said to have been performed on a sheet of water, in Essex, on the property of Mr. Boyd. The writer stated, that—

“ The trial took place in the grounds of Mr. Boyd, in the county of Essex, a few miles from town, in the presence of Sir R. Peel, Sir G. Murray, Sir H. Hardinge, Sir F. Burdett, Lord Ingestrie, Colonel Gurwood, Captain Britton, Captain Webster, and some other gentlemen, who all appeared very much astonished at what they saw. A boat, twenty-three feet long and seven broad, was placed in a large sheet of water; the boat had been the day before filled in with solid timber, four-and-a-half feet in depth, crossed in every direction, and clamped together with eight-inch spike nails. This filling in was made under the inspection of Captain Britton, who stated the fact to the distinguished gentlemen we have mentioned, and also that the inventor never went near the workmen employed, that no suspicion might be entertained of any combustible materials being lodged in the hold of the vessel. Several of the gentlemen were on Saturday rowed in a punt to the vessel, and examined it for themselves, so that every doubt might be removed as to the cause of destruction being external, and not from the springing of any mine. When the different parties had taken up their positions, on a signal from the inventor, the boat was set in motion, and struck just abaft her starboard bow, and instantaneously scattered into a thousand fragments. At the moment of collision the water parted, and presented to the eye of our informant the appearance of a huge bowl, while upon its troubled surface he noticed a coruscation precisely resembling forked lightning. A column of water was lifted up in the air like a huge fountain, from which were projected upwards for many hundred feet the shattered fragments of the vessel, which fell, many of them, several hundred yards distance in the adjacent fields. Our informant examined many pieces, and found the huge nails snapped like carrots; the mast looked like a tree felled by lightning, and never before, as he assures us, has he witnessed so sudden and complete a destruction, though he has seen shell and rocket practice on the largest scale.

The hon. Member proceeded to say, that this was nearly all he knew on the subject. He thought the House and the country were entitled to some information

on a question of such vast magnitude, affecting the maritime power of the country, and important both as regarded the demands of humanity and considerations of public economy. If such a power as this was in existence, there would be an end of war, for he believed very few persons would be found willing to expose themselves to such a force as was described in the account he had read. What he wished to know from the noble Lord opposite, who had witnessed more than one experiment, was, whether the account given in the *Times* newspaper, which had been repeated by Mr. Walesby, a gentleman of undoubted veracity, was true, and entitled to belief.

Viscount Ingestrie said, that in answer to the question put to him, he would state shortly to the House, that in his opinion the account of the experiment alluded to by the hon. Member was perfectly true. He very much regretted that this subject had been brought before the public by means either of a newspaper or a pamphlet, or by a conversation in that House; because he thought the immense power obtained by this invention ought to have been secured to the country in the most secret manner possible. He had been aware of this invention now for upwards of a year. His attention had been called to it by an indistinct paragraph which he saw by accident in a newspaper. It struck him that there was something behind more than met the eye, and he followed up the track. He could only state, that from that hour his conviction had become stronger every moment, that the possession of the invention was of the greatest possible moment to this country. He should hesitate in making this statement were it only his own opinion, but when the same opinion had been expressed to her Majesty's Government by such distinguished officers as Sir Richard Keats and Sir Thomas Hardy, who, unfortunately, were now no more, he could not refrain from saying, that this was a subject of the greatest possible importance to this country. There were other officers, now living, who had witnessed the experiment, and among them General Sir G. Murray, who had gone to see the experiment, at his suggestion, and who was struck, as everybody must be, with the immense power which was contained in a small compass. That gallant officer had authorized him to say, that after communicating further with the

inventor, he had had an interview with the first Lord of the Treasury, to state to him his opinion that Government ought to inquire into the matter. The inventor of this new power had, to his knowledge, expended the whole of his fortune upon it, and had been for ten years endeavouring to press on the Government the necessity of taking up the subject. The inventor had been pressed in a way which he (Lord Ingestrie) need not describe, but which was certainly most embarrassing, and he would say, that the House and the country owed him the greatest possible gratitude, for his patriotism, in resisting the most tempting offers from foreign Governments, which would have at once relieved him from all his difficulties. The gentleman of whom he spoke persisted nobly, determined to sacrifice his own pecuniary interests for the present, in order that the benefits of the invention might be secured to his own country. He (Viscount Ingestrie) felt very strongly and deeply on this subject; he had taken it up in no light spirit; he had investigated it, and believed it to be of the most vital importance. Through his means the inventor had had communication, both personally and by letter, with the First Lord of the Treasury; he had not failed to urge on the noble Lord the necessity of ascertaining whether the discovery were worth possessing or not. It could easily be ascertained, in a very short time, whether the invention were valuable or not; that was all he asked for; but he must say, that it was cruel to the inventor, and unjust to the country, that the question should not long ago have been decided. He had given the noble Lord, at the head of the Treasury, a warning that he might feel it his duty to bring the question before the House, and, had the Session continued, he should probably have submitted a distinct motion with reference to it. Now, that the matter had become public, he hoped no further time would be lost, but he must repeat his regret at this publicity having been given to it, as it would render negotiation more difficult with the inventor, and, in his opinion, the secret ought to have remained in the breast of the noble Lord and of the inventor.

Sir F. Burdett had been a witness to the experiment, and, though no one could adequately judge of it who had not seen war, he would state that he could not conceive a sight more astonishing. The

contrast between the small bulk and trivial appearance of the instrument, and the mighty effects produced, was most marvellous. The explosion scattered the substance against which the projectile was directed into fragments, some of which were blown over a grove of high trees near the spot. He had himself raised up a fragment about half as large as a table. He hoped means would be taken to secure to the country a power of such magnitude, and which those who could estimate it said would produce effects infinitely greater than any invention of the kind yet heard of.

Mr. Brotherton could not see the wisdom of making such a discovery public. He disapproved of giving rewards to men who exercised the noblest powers of mind in devising means of destruction, instead of devoting them to objects useful to society. It was said this would have the effect of putting an end to war, and he sincerely hoped it might.

Conversation terminated.

House adjourned.

#### HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, June 17, 1841.

*Minutes.*] Bills. Read a first time:—Highway Rates.—  
Read a second time:—Millia Pay; Appropriation; Election Petitions; Madhouses (Scotland); Dog Carts, &c.—  
Read a third time:—Dublin Wide Streets; Sewers; Western Australia; New South Wales; Houses of Industry (Ireland); Insolvent Debtors (Ireland); Banks of Issue; Municipal Corporations; School Sites.

Petitions presented. By the Earl of Devon, the Earl of Clare, and Earl Fitzwilliam, from Devonshire, Yorkshire, and other places, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By the Duke of Rutland, from Croydon, against the New Poor-law Bill.

**PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.]** The Marquess of *Normanby* moved the second reading of the Punishment of Death Bill.

The Earl of Haddington said, he should move as an amendment to the clause relating to rape, that after the word "death," near the end of the clause, should be inserted "excepting in cases of rape, where more than one person is concerned."

The Marquess of *Normanby* felt it his duty to resist the amendment; her Majesty's Government thought the proposition of an hon. and learned Gentleman in the other House was well worthy of their attention, and one it would be consistent with their duty to support. He (the Marquess of *Normanby*) thought, that as far as number was concerned, the offence was the same. He would call the attention of their Lordships to a circumstance which

had happened about two years ago. Their attention had been called to cases where conviction had taken place, but he would bring before them a case where conviction had not taken place. So strong was the case to which he was about to allude, that the neighbouring magistrates forwarded a memorial to her Majesty's Government respecting it. Of that memorial the following is a copy :—

*“ Copy of Memorial from several Magistrates, addressed to the Right Hon. Lord John Russell, as Secretary of State for the Home Department, in 1837.*

“ We the undersigned, being resident in and near Gloucester, feel deeply interested in a trial that has just taken place at the assizes in this city, and considering its result has a most important bearing on the proposed alterations in the criminal laws, now under the care of Government, feel it our duty to lay before your Lordship some important particulars of the trial, for the veracity of which we beg to refer to the judge, Mr. Baron Bolland; to Sergeant Ludlow, or to any other official person connected with the court.

“ It appears that three men, named Parry, Wright and Rea, were indicted for a violent assault and rape, committed on the person of Mary Lee. The evidence not only proved most clearly the guilt of the prisoners, but also that the crime had been committed under the most revolting circumstances of violence and cruelty.

“ The jury, after a long deliberation, inquired of the judge whether they could bring in any mitigating form of verdict which would save the lives of the prisoners, of whose guilt such an inquiry proves they were convinced. On finding, however, there was no alternative between acquittal and death, their fears of being accessory to the infliction of this dreadful punishment appears to have overcome every other consideration, as they soon returned a verdict of ‘ not guilty,’ to the astonishment of all who had heard the evidence given in the court. The case has produced an unusual sensation in this city and neighbourhood, and every one feels that there must be something decidedly wrong for men so clearly guilty of so black a crime to be thrown back upon society altogether unpunished, by the verdict of twelve disinterested men. And if the evil, wherever it may be, is not speedily corrected, society will be left in a fearfully unprotected condition, and a great encouragement will be given to the commission of the deepest crimes.

“ It is this circumstance that has excited and alarmed the public mind in this neighbourhood with regard to this case, and has induced us to bring it especially under the notice of your Lordship at this important juncture, as a clear and practical illustration of the evils arising out of our present system of criminal jurisprudence—evils which, we believe, can only be remedied by such an alteration in the law as

shall substitute some severe secondary punishment for that of death.

“ We may throw the blame upon the jury, it is true, but that will not correct the evil of which we complain, since, from what we have seen of the difficulty of obtaining convictions in capital cases, and from what we know of the growing repugnance in the public mind to the sacrifice of life, we consider it quite certain that juries will be found more and more unwilling to become accessory to a punishment at which their feelings will increasingly revolt as it becomes more rare, and the uselessness of which, for the protection of society, is daily becoming more apparent.

“ In the hope that this private communication of the facts above stated may tend to determine your Lordship in carrying the proposed ameliorations of the criminal law sufficiently far to meet the decidedly altered views of society, and to secure the community against the improper acquittal of guilty and dangerous men, we beg to subscribe ourselves, your Lordship's most obedient humble servants,

[Signed by the mayor (Shute) of Gloucester and four county and city magistrates.]”

Now, the circumstances of this case were most revolting, and there was no doubt as to the facts. Nevertheless, the jury put this question to the judge—whether, if they found them guilty, the men's lives would be spared? The result was an acquittal. The jury were to blame, certainly, but this was the general feeling amongst jurors, and the great object of their Lordships was to obtain convictions. In another case, where the party was indicted for an assault and rape, an acquittal took place, the judge having informed him (the Marquess of Normanby) that the extreme penalty of the law being attached to the crime prevented a conviction taking place. He would put it to their Lordships whether, when the convictions had diminished in proportion to the acquittals to so large an amount as the returns exhibited, it would not be most judicious in them to amend the law, so as to ensure conviction in every case where the facts warranted it. He believed, that the interests of justice would be best promoted by not attempting to make the distinction proposed by his noble Friend. The practice and experience of courts of law had shown that juries, upon whom they must rely for carrying the law into effect, would not convict where the capital punishment was attached.

The Earl of Winchelsea intimated, that it was his intention to propose an amendment, by striking out the two last lines of

clause 3, and if the amendment was rejected, he should propose, that the third clause be struck out altogether.

Lord *Denman* said, he was extremely unwilling to take any part on a question relating to the amendment of the criminal law, unless he distinctly saw that the House of Lords was determined to pass the amendments suggested, because he felt the utmost inconvenience if, as a legislator, he should oppose a law which, afterwards, as a judge, he might be bound to carry into effect. He had therefore abstained from taking part in the discussion which took place on the measure the other night, and had also abstained from coming down to the House, because he found the House of Commons had sent up a bill to abolish the punishment of death in cases of that sort, and he waited for the decision of their Lordships, and to bow to the law as it should be pronounced by the Legislature. But he must say he thought, when the House of Commons had sanctioned a principle as to the offence in general, and when their Lordships also had sanctioned a principle as to the offence in general, it was a monstrous anomaly that capital punishments should be kept alive with regard to the particular mode of the offence. It was clear, that the offence as committed by many persons might partake of a character of cruelty and profligacy which might not be the case with regard to offences committed by individuals. But rapes committed by individuals might be of a far worse character than those committed by several persons. He (Lord *Denman*) had had experience on this subject, and he knew by experience these rapes were seldom deliberately committed. They were usually the result of some accidental communication at a fair or junketing, where persons of different sexes came together, and when at a late hour of the night some unfortunate female, whose imprudence had led her into the company, became the victim of brutal and disgusting outrage. But he was sure, that there were cases of this sort where their Lordships' feelings, and the feelings of the public would revolt at the infliction of the punishment of death. Then why should one class of cases be selected in order to raise inquiries respecting it, and to raise the most painful duties that could possibly be cast upon a jury? Was it fit still to ask juries as an alternative, whether they would commit perjury or that

which they considered to be murder? He believed the principles were much too strongly urged. His own opinion was, that the juries manfully did their duty, and that it was as often the fault of the judge who contemplated with horror the depriving a fellow creature of life as of juries, that persons accused of this crime were frequently acquitted. He confessed, that it appeared to him, that it would be injurious to make this single exception. It was one to which the ministers of the law would feel the greatest objection. He had no wish to press their opinions against the decision of their Lordships, but as he had found that the opinions and representations of the judges had had great weight with their Lordships, he would take the liberty of suggesting, that before this clause was passed, himself and his noble Friend (Lord *Abinger*) should have an opportunity of conferring with the judges and ascertaining their opinion. He would have refrained from making those observations, had he not felt, that the general principle being once carried, no small and accidental circumstance should be suffered to interfere with it.

The Earl of *Wicklow* opposed the amendment, on the ground that there were grades of criminality in the offence; that in some forms it was aggravated, and in others of less importance. If they drew a distinction at all, they must draw it in such a number of cases, that it would be an absurdity to abolish this punishment at all.

Lord *Lyndhurst* suggested, that the word "concerned" in the amendment of his noble Friend, might have a larger legal sense than he intended, as one who was privy to the commission of the offence, though absent, was said to be concerned in it.

Lord *Abinger* observed, the question which had been started, showed with what a serious question they were dealing. It would really appear, from the way in which it was forced on them, that they were a cipher in legislation.

Lord *Denman* said, the question was, whether public opinion had decided the principle of this measure, not whether one day or ten days were allowed for the discussion of it.

The Earl of *Haddington* thought the best course would be to postpone the bill until to-morrow.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, that

if there was any strong feeling in the House, that the question required further reference, he should not oppose it, though at the same time he was prepared to give a negative to the postponement of the question; and also to urge upon their Lordships to do so. His own inclination was to go on, but still, if it was the opinion of the House, that a postponement should take place, he should not object to it. As to his having the opinion of the judges, when he spoke on that point he merely meant to say, that he consulted the judge who tried each case, which was submitted to him, and the opinions of the judges he found to be such as he had stated.

The Earl of *Westmeath* knew not what the noble and learned Lord opposite meant by the sanction of public opinion. He had seen some clever publications, urging the abolition of the punishment of death, but who would say, that these conveyed correctly the public opinion?

The Earl of *Wicklow* said, it was true, this bill had been carried this Session by the House of Commons; but it had been rejected Session after Session in former years. And how was it now carried? In the very last days of the Session, when the House was hurrying to terminate its business, and when it could not give due consideration to any subject of importance, much less to one of such vast magnitude as this. If they passed this law, they would lower themselves in public opinion; for as the organ of the public voice, they would sanction what the people of this country would never confirm—that sodomy and rape were not crimes of so heinous a character as to deserve death.

Lord *Brougham* said, that among the reasons given for postponing the measure was the great difficulty in framing a provision of this description. He had on a former occasion, when the subject was before the House, stated those difficulties. He thought, that the subject, from the difficulties which surrounded it, required further consideration, and that their Lordships should pause before they proceeded to introduce a change in the present law. He was not aware, that it would be impossible to revert to the capital punishment in aggravated cases, if it should be found free from the objections to which he had alluded, and if the difficulties could be overcome. He could not agree with

the doctrine, that if they remitted a severe punishment in any case they had not a right, after having had greater experience and after having further considered the subject, to retrace their steps, and resort to the severe punishment again, if it should be found necessary; and he should think, that in making alterations in the criminal law, he should incur a great risk, if those alterations were to be considered as final, conclusive, and binding, and could not be altered after further experience. He thought enough had been said to show, that it would be better to postpone the further consideration of this enactment.

The Marquess of *Normanby* had no objection to adjourn the debate until to-morrow. It would be extremely inconvenient to postpone it beyond to-morrow, because, if there were any amendments made, the bill must be returned to the Commons.

The Earl of *Wicklow* could see no reason for postponing the whole subject. They could divide upon the clause at once, and if it should not be rejected, then the consideration of the proposition before their Lordships could be postponed until to-morrow. He hoped his noble Friend would persevere in his motion for expunging the clause.

The Earl of *Devon* had ever been favourable to the system which had prevailed of late years, and supported proposition after proposition for the mitigation of the penal law. The object they had to determine was not in his opinion, whether they should refer for information to the judges for their opinion, as a basis whereupon to legislate. He was convinced already, that the alteration in the law proposed in the third clause of this bill would not effect the object sought—namely, the certainty of conviction by the juries impanelled. He should, therefore, support the proposition, that the clause be altogether omitted.

The Earl of *Harewood* did not think it was becoming in their Lordships to require the opinion of the judges to authorise them to legislate on this subject. He could not at all subscribe to the opinion, that the House ought to legislate on the opinion of the judges. He objected to the manner in which it was proposed to obtain that opinion. The noble and learned Lord was to collect it in his conversation with those learned persons, and



then to report it to the House. He thought, that the House ought neither to legislate on the opinion of the judges, nor on the opinions of juries. Whether or not juries would do their duty in convicting prisoners guilty of this offence, he never would consent to see it visited with any punishment short of death.

The Earl of *Radnor*: The question was not, what crimes were worthy of death, but what were the punishments which would be effectual in repressing crime. When jurors forswore themselves rather than bring in a verdict of guilty, from the apprehension that loss of life would follow their decision, they must alter the punishment, for it was no longer effectual for its purpose.

The Earl of *Haddington* thought it was only common sense to be desirous of obtaining the opinions of the learned judges, who were the most competent persons in the land to give an opinion on such a subject. He hoped, that the debate would be adjourned.

The Earl of *Winchelsea* said, that there was no question of law to be submitted to the judges. The question simply was, whether such and such crimes were to remain capital felonies punishable with death. He could not, therefore, consent to the postponement of the bill.

Lord *Denman*, in explanation, said, he did not wish that the opinion of the judges should be obtained as a basis for legislation. He only desired to obtain their general impression on the subject.

Lord *Brougham* said, that the rational and regular course to pursue would be to consider the proposed amendments before they proceeded to expunge the clause altogether.

The Earl of *Devon* differed from the noble and learned Lord. It would be a waste of time to discuss amendments, if the House should be of opinion that the whole clause ought to be expunged.

The Duke of *Wellington* said, that the question before the House was a question which would be likely to be brought to a more satisfactory decision by an adjournment. It appeared, that all the other questions remained, with ample time and opportunity for their Lordships to decide upon them. He was, therefore, afraid, that if they did not adjourn this debate, they would not have time or opportunity to arrive at any satisfactory result upon it. He hoped they would adjourn this ques-

tion until to-morrow, in order that they might have time to make up their minds upon it, after inquiring further into it.

The Earl of *Winchelsea* said, he saw most willing to give way to the opinions which had been expressed by the noble Duke as well as other noble Lords, and he would have no objection to have this debate adjourned until to-morrow. At the same time, he begged to give notice, that he would move to strike out the first part of the clause altogether, or however amended it should be by their Lordships, he was determined to move that it be entirely expunged.

Debate adjourned.

PRIVATE BILLS—DISSOLUTION.] Lord *Wharnccliffe* begged to ask the noble Viscount whether he had considered the hardship to which individuals who had private bills before the House would be exposed by the dissolution, and what the noble Viscount proposed to do?

Viscount *Duncannon* said, that he was quite aware of the great hardship that those parties would be subject to, who were interested in the progress of private bills through Parliament this Session, by having their bills set aside by the dissolution of Parliament, and the heavy expense they had been already put to, thrown away. He had made inquiries into the subject, with a view of, if possible, providing some remedy for these grievances, and he had found, that on former occasions, of a similar description to the present, the Government had introduced a resolution into the new Parliament to place those parties in the same situation as that in which they would have stood had there been no dissolution. He begged to assure the noble Lord, that the same course would be pursued by her Majesty's Government, in the ensuing Parliament which had been adopted by other Governments to which he had alluded.

BRIBERY AT ELECTIONS.] The Marquess of *Normanby* moved, that their Lordships should resolve themselves into a Committee on the Bribery at Elections Bill.

Lord *Brougham* fully agreed in the strong desire which had been generally expressed, that some measure should be immediately passed through the Houses of Parliament which would have the effect of putting an end to

that abominable and wholesale system of bribery which had been carried on in so many cases throughout the kingdom. But however anxious he was to see such a bill passed, he must say that, in his opinion, the bill which was now before the House, and which purported to be a bill that would at once get rid of this abuse, was, on the contrary, a measure which would give every indemnity for the most wholesale bribery, and its more disastrous consequences. The bill first said, that all persons whatsoever shall be compellable (without any exception) to come forward and give evidence as to any act of bribery which may have come to their knowledge, including not only agents, including not only the parties, including not only the accessories to the bribery, but also including the evidence of the wife against the husband, without allowing any indemnity; also including the evidence of the counsel against the client, and the evidence of the solicitor and attorney against the client; yes, even the attorney was bound by the first section of this act, to give evidence against his client. If, after the client had perpetrated the offence, he came to consult his counsel or his attorney, that counsel or attorney who was to defend him, after the offence had been committed,—this confidential communication, which had been made for the purpose of aiding the defence of the client, might, by this bill, be extorted from his counsel or solicitor; and this he thought was contrary to every rule that had ever been laid down for the administration of justice. If it were said, that it had been intended to make an exception in the case of a wife as against her husband, or a solicitor or counsel against his client, that the judge would have power to make an exception in favour of these cases, he would say, that the judge had no right whatever, by the bill as it stood, to exclude any such cases at all. In fact, the question would not come on before the judges, but before the chairman of committees in the other House of Parliament. The second section enacted, “As well the candidates at any such election, or Members of the House of Commons.” Now, he thought it might be as well if the word “and” was here introduced, instead of the word “or.” And then it went on to say—“The chairman, by the direction of the committee, shall have a right to report to the House, if the party refuses to give

evidence, for the interposition of their authority or censure.” The interposition of their authority or censure! Now, he would ask, did mortal man ever hear of an Act of Parliament drawn up in this way? Why was it not written “their authority and censure?” Surely, if the House possessed authority, they also would possess the power of marking their approval or censure. Very little care, he thought, had been taken in the drawing up of the bill. The first section compelled the disclosure of bribery. Now, if they admitted the stringency of the first clause, they would see that there was no power given of an indemnity in favour of any persons. He therefore thought, that the only indemnity which it gave was, to secure the commission of a wholesale system of bribery. It would secure those who had given and taken bribes; for all that a party had to do, who had employed a score or two of corrupt and profligate persons to distribute money for the purpose of bribery at elections,—all that a party who was engaged in the defence of the persons who had been guilty of bribery—all that such a party had to do to secure an absolute and perpetual indemnity, both from a civil suit and criminal proceedings, and the censure of Parliament, was simply to go through the ceremony of calling up every one of those corrupt persons, and putting a single question to each. The present bill, in the 7th clause, would give an indemnity to candidates, as well as agents, guilty of bribery; for while such candidates, being proved guilty of bribery, were not re-eligible under the present law, they would be re-eligible under the bill proposed. The candidate being unseated on one allegation might, after a dexterous confession of his agent, go down again to his constituents, and be re-elected. It would also, in a great degree, indemnify agents. Would their Lordships pass such a bill? But being most anxious to prevent, as much as possible, the recurrence of acts which were most dangerous to the franchise, and the freedom of election itself, as well as subversive of the rights, liberties, and morals of the people, he would be happy to support any measure calculated to put a stop to those evils. The fourth clause, he allowed, was an exception to his general censure of the bill, and therefore he would retain it.

Lord *Abinger* concurred in all the animadversions of his noble and learned

Friend. Indeed, they were unanswerable. So hastily and crudely had this bill evidently been framed, that the inference from its contents naturally was, that its authors really did not intend that it should pass. A bill on such a difficult and important question of legislation should have been drawn up only after solemn and laborious consideration. But here we had a measure brought forward on the very eve of the close of the Session, most hastily put together, and yet proposing the enactment of clauses, which would be contrary to all the law and usages of this country; for such was the character of the section which would compel parties to criminate themselves. Even if it were right and just to make so great a change, surely it ought not to be done in the hasty legislation of one night. And, after all, the bill, if passed, would, as his noble and learned Friend had shown, protect bribery instead of prevent it. Still, he admitted that the fourth clause was a good one, and acquiescing in the wish of his noble and learned Friend, he would consent to its going into committee.

The Marquess of *Normanby* hoped the noble and learned Lord would withdraw the insinuation he had thrown out to the effect that the author of the bill did not intend that it should pass. The bill might be objectionable in many respects; but, for all that, he could assure the noble and learned Lord, the framers of it had been actuated by none but sincere intentions for its enactment.

Lord *Abinger* meant nothing personally offensive to the framers of the bill, he only spoke of the impression which its contents would make on the mind of any man.

Their Lordships in committee on the bill.

All the clauses in the bill, except the preamble, and the fourth clause, were rejected; and the preamble and the clause adverted to having been agreed to, the House resumed.

Report to be received.  
Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, June 17, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—Bills of Exchange; Loan Societies.—Read a third time:—Highway Rates.

Petitions presented. By Sir M. Chapman, from Westmeath,

by Lord Barrington, from Brighton, and another place, by Sir C. Burrell, from Sussex, and by Colonel Perceval, from Mayo, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Hayter, Mr. Wyse, and Mr. Bulmer, from various districts of the Metropolis, by Mr. Villiers, from various counties in England and Scotland, and by Mr. Fryme, from Cambridge, for a Repeal of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Masson, from Scotland, against Church Patronage.—By Mr. Fielden, from various places, for a Repeal of the New Poor-law; and for a Law to limit the Labour of hands in Factories.—By Mr. A. Chapman, from the Chamber of Commerce of Greenock, against the Alteration of the Timber Duties.—By Sir W. Follett, from Solicitors of Exeter, praying for a change in the Site of the Law Courts

[OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON.] On the motion of the Attorney-general the Order of the Day for the committal of this bill was read and discharged, for the purpose of withdrawing it till the next Session.

Order of the day discharged. Bill withdrawn.

[FOREIGN FACTORIES.] Mr. *Wodehouse* moved,

"That an humble Address be presented to her Majesty, praying that she will be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before Parliament, through the medium of her ambassadors or other diplomatic residents abroad, copies of all regulations established in foreign factories, together with such explanations in detail as the nature of the cases will admit; describing the character of the food used therein, and the wages paid therein, whether in specie or in kind."

Mr. *Labouchere* said, that his only objection to the motion arose from the impression upon his mind, that the information asked for had already been laid before the House in the returns and reports made by our foreign consuls for the information of the Poor-law commissioners. He thought that no additional information whatever could be obtained by the present motion; and it was scarcely fair to the consuls themselves, having so recently troubled them upon a similar subject, to call upon them to make fresh returns.

Mr. *Hume* said, he had given notice several days previously of his intention to move an amendment, which would have raised a general discussion on this subject, but in the present state of the House it appeared to him that no advantage would be derived from such a course. It was his intention to have brought the subject before the House this Session, and he would suggest to the President of the Board of Trade that he should do as was done by the Government of the United

States, where the tariffs were collected, and a copy of them distributed among the Members of Congress. He thought that it was the business of her Majesty's Government to collect the tariffs of every country with which we had commercial intercourse. We ought to know at what rate our manufactures were received in every country with which we dealt. This ought to be the business of some department or of some individual officer, and he knew no one better qualified for it than the Board of Trade. When he (Mr. Hume) was in Holland, he found they were publishing a quadruple tariff of the principal nations with which they dealt, and he did not see why England should be backward on the subject. His object was, that the House should be put in possession of the tariff of every State with which we traded, and that authentic copies of them should be in the possession of every Member of that House who felt interested in such subjects.

Mr. Wodehouse felt almost disposed to withdraw his motion, as the hon. Member for Kilkenny had made a statement far beyond it.

Mr. Hume wished to know whether the hon. Member opposite would have any objection to amend his motion, so as to give the tariffs of all States?

Mr. Labouchere did not see, that the motion had any thing to do with the tariffs of other nations. On that head one of the Secretaries to the Board of Trade was engaged in collecting information, which, when ready, would be laid on the Table of the House, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman would rest satisfied with this, and not press his motion to a division.

Sir John Guest stated, that he did not rise to object to the motion, although he feared that it would be exceedingly difficult to obtain the detailed information required; but he rose principally to notice what fell from a noble Lord, in another place, in respect to the iron trade. From what fell from that noble Lord, it might be inferred that the iron trade was in a flourishing state—a statement which he was sorry to say he could not confirm. On the contrary, a reduction in the price of bar iron had taken place of about 30 per cent.; and it was now in so distressed a state, that a reduction of a large amount in the rate of wages paid to the workmen in that trade had already taken place, and still further reduction was, he regretted to

say, on the eve of being effected. The iron trade was very much dependent upon the export trade, and it was impossible it could be prosperous unless we could take, in exchange for iron, those articles which we required and which other countries had to dispose of. He alluded particularly to the United States of America, upon commercial relations with which the iron trade mainly depended for prosperity.

Mr. Villiers thought that our ambassadors or consular agents had no right to enter the manufactories in foreign nations for the purpose of obtaining the information required by the hon. Gentleman who brought forward this motion.

Mr. Wodehouse said, he had never heard so extraordinary an assertion as that made by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. His object was, to obtain information in regard to the wages and habits of foreign workmen, which might be of great use in illustrating the condition of the working classes of this country, and he could not therefore withdraw his motion.

Motion agreed to.

Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, June 18, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a second time:—Highway Rates.  
—Read a third time:—Metropolis Improvements; County Bridges; Bribery at Elections.

Petitions presented. By Lord Ashburton, the Duke of Buckingham, the Marquess of Londonderry, the Earl of Aberdeen, the Earl of Haddington, the Earl of Ripon, Viscount Strangford, and the Earl of Harrington, from Norfolk, Great Dunmow, Newtownards, Kirkcaldy, Hotham, Coldstream, Canterbury, Surrey, and other places, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Lord Brougham, from a great many places, against any Grant of Public Money for Church Extension, and for the Abolition of Church Rates.

CORN-LAWS (IRELAND.)] The Marquess of Londonderry presented a petition from Newtownards, in the county Down, against any alteration of the Corn-laws. In presenting this petition, the noble Marquess begged to call the attention of their Lordships to the facts connected with it, and to the circumstances under which it had been signed. In order that the House might fully understand those circumstances, and might rightly appreciate the value which ought to be attached to this petition, he must inform them that a universal movement had been made in Ulster by the Radicals and Repealers of that district in favour of an alteration of the existing Corn-laws. This movement took place

on Tuesday, the 23rd of May, and he would be right for him to mention a circumstance which would exhibit the description of persons who took a part in this Anti Corn-law agitation, and the nature of such agitation. In almost all the instances, the meetings appeared to have been held at the Roman Catholic chapels, and to have been got up entirely by the priests. Many of the inhabitants of Newtownards, Comber, and its vicinity, gentlemen of wealth and respectability, however, entertaining entirely opposite views, and having no sympathy with the proceedings of these Radical meetings to which he had alluded, were determined to express their sentiments, and to remove from the district the stigma which had been thus attached to it. They accordingly requested Mr. Andrews, his agent, to call a counter-meeting, and at this meeting, attended by all the men of station and property in the neighbourhood, the petition which he now begged to present had been signed. The Newtownards meeting was solely in consequence of a most insignificant gathering in the Roman Catholic chapel, headed by the priest and a small linen draper, backed by a few weavers. All these Radical meetings had been organised and ordered by Mr. O'Connell, and were in absolute subversy to the Roman Catholic priests. He was bound also to inform their Lordships, that a general requisition from the county of Down had been signed for a public meeting; but it had been abandoned, because the magistrates of the county had been unwilling to excite agitation on so important a subject as a change in the Corn-laws. The feeling throughout the province of Ulster and all the northern parts of Ireland of the respectable farmers and men of station or property, was unanimously opposed to an alteration of the present system. With these remarks he begged to lay upon the Table the petition to which he had called their attention.

The Marquess of *Downshire* bore testimony to the almost universal feeling which prevailed through the north of Ireland in favour of the present Corn-laws. From his own personal knowledge he could testify to the respectability, and wealth, and station, of the petitioners whose petition the noble Marquess had presented.

Petition laid on the Table.

[DRAINAGE AND BUILDINGS.] The Earl of *Wicklow* wished to ask a question of the noble Marquess opposite, relative to two bills, which, after having been duly considered in their Lordships' House, had been passed, and sent to the other House of Parliament. One of these bills was for the better drainage of towns, the other for the improvement of buildings. He wished to know what had been done with those measures?

The Marquess of *Normanby* regretted to state, that the bills had been abandoned, in consequence of the termination of the Session at an earlier period than had been expected. He had, however, one consolation, that it was not his fault, nor did it arise from any want of zeal on the part of the Government, that the bills had not been passed.

[PUNISHMENT OF DEATH.] The Marquess of *Normanby* moved the resumption of the adjourned debate on the amendments proposed to the abolition of the Punishment of Death Bill, after the third reading.

The Earl of *Haddington* would not, after the discussion which had taken place, persist in pressing his amendment (for the continuance of capital punishment in cases of rape in which more persons than one were engaged). He, therefore begged leave to withdraw it.

The Earl of *Winchelsea* was of opinion, that the third clause exempted from the punishment of death the perpetrators of certain crimes that ought to be visited with the heaviest punishment. The crime to which the first part of the clause related, was one which he thought ought especially to remain a subject for capital punishment. He implored their Lordships not to withdraw the punishment of death from a crime so utterly abhorrent to the feelings of human nature. It was to be observed, that a conviction for that crime could not be obtained unless on the clearest and most undoubted evidence. Their Lordships, he was convinced, would do great violence to the moral feelings of a very large class of the community, if they exempted this crime from the punishment of death. He, therefore, moved, that all the words of the 3rd clause from the word "that" in the fifth line to the word "felon" in the seventh line be omitted.

The Marquess of *Normanby* was glad that the noble Earl had proposed his

amendment with so much brevity, because one of the worst things their Lordships could do was to enter into a discussion on an amendment of this kind. He thought there was some difficulty in dealing with this offence. Retaining the capital punishment, prosecution would in many instances be nugatory, and if they commuted the punishment to transportation for life, that would necessarily imply communion of the offenders with other prisoners, which would be highly improper; at the same time he should be ready to bow to the opinion of the House in this matter.—Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of *Winchilsea* again rose to move the other amendment of which he had given notice. His object was, to keep the law in its present state. If the capital punishment in cases of rape were remitted, he very much feared the offence would alarmingly increase. He therefore begged leave to move, that the clause be omitted.

The Marquess of *Normanby* defended the clause. If capital punishment were retained, the convictions would be greatly diminished. He hoped their Lordships would not be induced to depart from the principle of this clause, which they had already affirmed in a very full House.

Lord *Ashburton* thought the commutation of the capital punishment would secure conviction where the offence had been committed, whereas the retention of the extreme penalty would in many cases not only prevent prosecution, but interfere with conviction.

The Earl of *Wicklow* was favourable to the amendment. He admitted, that the reasonings of the law lords the other evening in favour of the clause would have been extremely cogent if they had been founded on fact, but he denied that such was the case. He could not agree that the paucity of convictions arose from an impression in the public mind, that the punishment was at all disproportioned to the offence. It arose entirely from the peculiarity of the proof in each case.

Their Lordships divided on the question that the clause stand part of the bill:—Contents 64; Not-Contents 60: Majority 4.

The Earl of *Wicklow* hoped, that the noble Marquess would extend the operation of this bill to Ireland.

The Marquess of *Normanby* replied, that it was his intention to extend it, at

the earliest period, both to Ireland and Scotland.

Bill passed.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN BOROUGHs.] On the motion of the Marquess of *Normanby*, the Criminal Justice in Boroughs Bill was read a second time. The Standing Orders were suspended, and it was moved the House go into committee on the bill.

The Earl of *Wilton* objected to the bill proceeding in its present state, his object being to exempt Manchester from its operation. He therefore objected to the motion that the bill go into committee. The reason why he proposed this was, that the clerk of the peace of Manchester had had no compensation given to him, and this bill would therefore inflict great injustice on him.

The Earl of *Warwick* would consent to this exemption, as it would not endanger the bill, as it was a good bill as far as it concerned Warwickshire.

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, when this bill had been brought forward on a former occasion a complaint had been made, that certain officers whose offices were to be put an end to by the bill had not had compensation, and it was agreed that the bill should stand over in order that compensation might be given and a bill brought into the House of Commons for that purpose. The House of Commons had given compensation in two instances, but had refused it in the case of Manchester. Their Lordships having previously allowed the bill to stand over till compensation was granted, and that having been refused as to Manchester, it appeared to him that this bill ought not to pass as regarded Manchester. The bill applied to various boroughs, and if they left out the borough of Manchester there would be no hardship as to rates on the other boroughs, as the charges relating to Manchester would be left out.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, that if the noble Lord pressed his amendment, he would decidedly endanger the passing of the bill. He thought if they exempted Manchester from the operation of the bill, a heavier rate must fall on other places. It would in fact, transfer the payment of the rates from one party to another.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* must object to the manner in which the noble Marquess was pressing on this bill.

The Marquess of *Normanby* denied, that he was pressing this bill at all improperly upon the House. It had been for a considerable time under discussion in the other House, as well as in that of their Lordships, and came up now in its due course from the House of Commons.

Viscount *Duncannon* said, he did not know how they could leave out Manchester from the operation, so as to render the measure efficient or satisfactory.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, he was certain that the noble Lord opposite could not be aware of the great inconvenience which would be produced in Manchester and elsewhere if the amendment were to be carried. It would, in fact, be impossible for him to overstate the serious consequences which would then arise, and the great confusion which it would cause in those places. He begged to inform the noble Lord that it was to the clerk of the peace, and the clerk of the peace only, that compensation was to be granted. He would hope, that under all these circumstances, the noble Lord would not endanger the bill itself, by pressing his amendment to a division.

The Lord Chancellor said, their Lordships were perhaps not aware of the extensive objects of this bill to facilitate the administration of the criminal law in all the new boroughs. They could not proceed to the administration of justice without the assistance of this bill. The bill had come before the House, and objections had been made that certain persons supposed to be entitled to compensation were not provided for; and to a certain extent the clerk of the peace of the Duchy of Lancaster appeared to be entitled to compensation. There were other claims also, and it was clear that their Lordships would not support the measure without such provision. But their Lordships could not introduce this provision, and they had suspended the proceedings on the bill, in order to see what the House of Commons would do as to compensation. The case of the individual that the noble Earl advocated was subjected to discussion in the House of Commons, and that House decided against the claim. Their Lordships had been in the habit of considering that compensation was not a subject for the jurisdiction of that (the Lords) House, and the question now, therefore, was whether the House of Commons were competent to decide that ques-

tion; and, having decided that this individual was not entitled to any compensation, whether their Lordships would deny to all these borough towns the benefit of this act, in order to compel the House of Commons to grant this compensation. The party having failed this Session in obtaining compensation, was not at all precluded from making another attempt in the House of Commons next Session.

Lord *Brougham* reminded noble Lords that this had not been treated as any party question by the other House of Parliament, as it appeared that Sir Robert Peel as well as Lord John Russell had voted against any compensation. In mentioning this fact, he only spoke in vindication of the course which the other House had thought proper to pursue upon this subject.

The Earl of *Wilton* having pressed his motion, the House divided on the question that the bill be committed—Contents 32: Not Contents 32.

The numbers being equal, the contents carried the motion, in conformity with the practice of the House.

House in committee.

The Earl of *Wilton* then moved a proviso to the effect, "that nothing in the act should be construed as affecting the borough of Manchester."

The Marquess of *Normanby* observed, that the effect of the proviso, if carried, would be to defeat the bill.

The House again divided on the proviso—Contents 31: Not Contents 32: Majority 1.

Bill passed through committee and was reported.

DOG CARTS.] The Earl of *Chichester* moved the committal of the Dog Carts Bill.

Lord *Portman* opposed the bill, as he did not see the necessity of extending the operations of such a measure into the rural districts; and in the large towns it would not be necessary, as the Municipal Corporations Act would enable the authorities of those places to forbid dog-carts by by-laws if they thought proper. Yet, of all those towns, the only one that had made a by-law against dog-carts was Oxford, probably in order that the riding of the students should not be impeded. But he objected to the bill on principle, as it was excessively severe, for it would be a great hardship to fine a baker, for im-

stanoë, who might have a dog under his cart, while he went to serve his customers. As for hydrophobia there were no grounds whatever for assuming that this bill would tend to check that terrible malady, for he would ask the noble Lord whether he could state, as a fact proved by experience in this or any other country, that hydrophobia had been caused by over-working dogs? Further, the whole structure of the bill was absurd: for instance, it would make the person working a dog in a cart guilty of misdemeanor; now misdemeanor was an indictable offence, and yet a subsequent clause ordered that the misdemeanor should be carried before a justice of the peace. He moved as an amendment, that the bill be committed that day three months.

The Earl of *Wicklow* observed that in the former stage there was not a single dissentient, for humanity strongly demanded that dogs should be rescued from the brutal treatment we had long seen inflicted upon them by their inhuman masters. He therefore hoped his noble Friend would not persevere in his opposition.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* said, it would be most cruel to fine a baker, as this bill proposed, who should leave a dog to take care of his cart while he went to serve a customer. He thought this was going too far. However, he would support the general principle of protecting dogs from the cruelty of their masters.

The Marquess of *Normanby* suggested to his noble Friend the propriety of postponing the further progress of this measure until next Session.

Bill postponed.—Adjourned.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Friday, June 18, 1841.*

**MISCELLANEOUS.]** *Bill.* Read a third time:—Court of Chancery. Petitions presented. By Mr. Villiers, from Districts in the neighbourhood of London, and from places in Hertis, and Bucks, by Mr. Callaghan, from Cork, by Mr. Hastie, from different parts of Scotland, by Lord John Russell, from Lambeth, St. George's-in-the-East, and other places in the vicinity of the Metropolis, from Peebles, Dumfries, Rosburgh, and other parts of Scotland, and by Colonel Evans, from the Tower Hamlets, and neighbouring places, for an Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Bethell, from different parts of Yorkshire, by Mr. Round, from Maldon, Essex, by Sir George Clerk, from a place in Berwickshire, and by Colonel Percival, from Cork, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Lord John Russell, from various Dissenting bodies in Stroud, and other places in Gloucestershire, for the Admission of Dissenting Ministers to Union Workhouses.—By Mr. Wakley, from James Nelson, a labouring man at Man-

chester, for Reform of Parliament.—By Mr. Hume, from Middlesborough, in favour of the Government propositions.—By Mr. Etwall, from Baptists of Andover, against Church Rates.—By Mr. Etwall, from Ratepayers of Stockbridge, Hants, against the Poor-law.

**SOUND DUES.]** Mr. *Hutt* seeing the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade in his place, was anxious to learn from the right hon. Gentleman whether any progress had been made towards effecting a revision of the Sound duties, in accordance with the motion which he had submitted to the House in the month of March last.

Mr. *Labouchere* trusted, the answer he was enabled to give to the question put to him by the hon. Member for Hull would be satisfactory to the House, and to the great mercantile interests affected by this question. He was enabled to state, that a protocol had been signed by his noble Friend the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and by the Danish Minister, by which he (Mr. Labouchere) hoped the foundation had been laid which would speedily lead to a satisfactory adjustment of the matter. The protocol had not yet been ratified by the King of Denmark, but he believed it was the intention of his noble Friend at the head of the Foreign Department to lay it upon the table of the House, and thus enable hon. Members to see the terms of the arrangement which had been entered into. With regard to the revision of the tariff, commissioners for that purpose would be appointed to proceed immediately with that revision, and he trusted that the whole of this important question would be settled at no distant period.

**PUBLIC MONUMENTS—SIR SIDNEY SMITH.]** Sir *F. Burdett* rose to put a question to the noble Lord with reference to a motion which the House would recollect that he had intended to bring before the House upon the erection of a monument to the late Sir Sidney Smith, but which he was prevented from submitting to the House by an assurance that it was the intention of the Government to take up the subject, and he was willing to leave it in their hands, conceiving them to be the fittest persons to conduct the necessary arrangements. He was, however, much surprised and disappointed when he found that amongst the supplies proposed by the Government no grant for such a purpose was mentioned, and, that in fact,



no further notice was taken of the matter. He really had expected that some intimation of carrying out this object would be made by the Government, and he felt the disappointment the more because he was anxious to have said a few words respecting the gallant individual in question, with whom he had been formerly acquainted. Only the night before last he received a note from the noble Lord, stating that it was not the intention of the Government to do anything in the business during the present Session. He believed that there was a concurrent desire on the part of the public that a monument should be erected to the memory of Sir S. Smith, and some explanation of the intentions of Government was due to the House, to the Friends and relations of that gallant person, to the profession of which he was an ornament, to the country at large, and he might be permitted to add, to himself, because he felt that he was in rather an awkward predicament, not knowing what answers to give to those applicants who wished to be informed what had become of the project. All he knew at present was, that a promise had been made on the part of the Government, which had not been carried into effect.

Lord John Russell replied, that he certainly undertook that a sum sufficient for the erection of a monument to Sir Sidney Smith should be provided out of the public funds, if the House of Commons would consent to such a vote; but upon taking the matter further into consideration, the cases of some other officers who had also been engaged in the service of the country, were brought before the Government; and there were two of those cases, which seemed to be of sufficient importance to induce the Government to consider whether, in those instances, as well as in the instance of Sir Sidney Smith, it would not be proper to erect monuments at the public expense. He alluded to Lords Exmouth and Saumarez. If the Session had proceeded in the ordinary manner, it was his intention either to have taken out of the civil contingencies, a sum sufficient for the erection of the proposed monuments, or to have obtained the amount by a separate vote in the miscellaneous estimates. The hon. Baronet was, however, aware that an interruption had occurred in the ordinary proceedings of public business; and, for that reason, Government

had thought it better not to bring forward any supplementary estimates, but merely to take those which were necessary for carrying on the public service. Such, indeed, was the understanding of both sides of the House, and it seemed to him the better course, to reserve the application for such a sum, until Parliament met again. He could assure the hon. Baronet, that his opinions in favour of erecting a monument to Sir Sidney Smith had undergone no change, and that the delay in bringing the subject forward had entirely arisen from the peculiar circumstances of the present Session.

Sir F. Burdett understood the noble Lord to say, that the delay had occurred, not from any change in his opinion as to the propriety of erecting a monument to Sir Sidney Smith, but from the unlooked-for circumstances which cut short the present Session. The family of Sir Sidney Smith, and the public, might then expect to see the promise of erecting a monument fulfilled, for he understood the noble Lord to say, that he had not given up his intention of taking the matter in hand.

Mr. Hume said, that the monuments ought to be erected in some place where the public could see them. They had thirty or forty public monuments, which had cost the country upwards of 100,000*l.*, but to which the public had no access. He hoped, therefore, that in future, no monuments would be placed in a situation to which the people were debarred access, and he trusted the noble Lord would give his attention to this part of the subject.

Conversation at an end.

RAILWAY TRAVELLING.] Lord R. Grosvenor, as we understood, wished to know why passengers were excluded from travelling by certain lines of railroad on which the mails were carried. For instance, persons going to Dublin were obliged to go round by Warrington to Liverpool, while the mails were sent by a shorter route. He wished to know whether the Board of Trade had not the power of remedying the evil.

Mr. Sheil thought that passengers had a right to be conveyed by the shortest route; but he would make enquiry on the subject, and answer the noble Lord on Monday.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said,

the point had been raised in regard to other parts of the country, besides that alluded to by the noble Lord, and he apprehended that, though by law the Government had power to compel railway proprietors to forward the mails, they had no power to oblige them to carry passengers.

The House then adjourned.

## HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, June 21, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Received the Royal Assent:—Sugar Duties; Assessed Taxes Compositions; Stamp Duties (Law Proceedings); Banks of Issue; Ecclesiastical Commissioners; Militia Ballots Suspension; Court of Chancery; Tithes Recovery; Copyhold and Customary Tenure; Felony Explanation; Frivolous Suits; Vaccination; Metropolis Improvements (No. 2); Municipal Corporations; Victoria Park; Sewers; Ordnance Survey; Turnpike Roads; Turnpike Roads and Highways; School Sites (No. 2); County Bridges (No. 2); Western Australia; New South Wales.—Read a third time:—Highway Rates; Militia Pay; Appropriation.

Petitions presented. By Viscount Duncannon, from Sheerness, for an Alteration in the Corn-laws; and by the Earl of Haddington, from Berwickshire, and several parts of Scotland, and by Lord Lyndhurst, from Colchester, Witherfield, and other parts of Essex, against any Alteration.

### CORN LAWS.—THE DISSOLUTION.]

Lord Brougham presented a petition from Footscray for the total repeal of the Corn-laws. He said, that he felt it his duty to the important question of the Corn-laws and free trade generally, to state, regarding what was called the appeal to the country about to be made, that he did not consider it as a fair appeal upon that question, and when he recollected the circumstances in which the appeal was made, and the points upon which it really turned, he should by no means look upon the result of the general election as a decision of the country upon the Corn-laws and free trade.

Petition laid on the Table.

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN BOROUGHES.]

The Marquess of Normanby moved the third reading of the Criminal Justice in Boroughs Bill,

The Earl of Wilton said, it was his intention to move, that the borough of Manchester should be exempted from the operation of the bill. He did so because the measure did not provide compensation for the clerk to the magistrates of Manchester, whose interests would be injuriously affected by it. That individual had for many years, performed the onerous

duties of his office in a manner highly creditable to himself, and with perfect satisfaction to the public. His case, therefore, was fairly entitled to a favourable consideration; and he (the Earl of Wilton) should feel, that he was wanting in the proper discharge of his duty if he did not endeavour to persuade their Lordships to agree to his amendment, the effects of which would be, to prevent the infliction of injustice on a meritorious individual. The responsibility did not rest with him, if his proposition were likely to affect the bill injuriously. It would rest entirely with the noble and learned Lord on the woolsack, to whom he had afforded an opportunity for making a satisfactory arrangement, and not with him. The noble Earl concluded by moving, that the following clause be added to the bill:—“Provided also, that nothing in the said act be extended to, or be construed to extend to, the borough of Manchester.”

The Lord Chancellor opposed the amendment. The claims of the individual alluded to had been rejected by the House of Commons. It would be a great hardship if other places should be deprived of the benefits to be derived under this Bill because the claims of this individual to compensation were not recognized.

The Duke of Wellington was of opinion, that compensation should be granted to this gentleman. Care had always been taken by their Lordships that individuals should not be injured by any measure that came before them, and he hoped that they would not, on the present occasion, depart from so wise and just a principle. There never was a better case made out for compensation than this. The gentleman alluded to had served the office for twenty-five years, and had given complete satisfaction to all those with whom he had been in communication during that long period. This measure would deprive him of a great part of the emoluments of the office which he held without providing any compensation for him, and the amendment of his noble Friend was intended to prevent the perpetration of such a wrong. The amendment would not put an end to the Bill, which would still be applicable to Birmingham, Bolton, Warwick, and other places, though Manchester was excluded from its operation. Compensation was, it appeared, refused by the other House; but that was no reason why their Lordships should not express the feeling

which they entertained on the subject. Compensation being the principle on which all such measures proceeded, he could not conceive why that principle had been abandoned in this instance.

Lord *Brougham* admitted, that it would not only be great injustice, but the worst policy in the world, when they were making practical reforms, if they did not, when injury was likely to ensue, award a fair and just measure of compensation. But he did not think, that that principle applied to the present case. The Bill did not, it should be observed, abolish the office. It lessened the profits, but it also reduced the labours connected with it. In all other cases where compensation was granted the situation held by the individual to be compensated was permanent. Such was not the case here. This was an office held during pleasure—the pleasure of the justices. The clerk might be removed by them from the situation any day.

Lord *Lyndhurst* supported the amendment. He wished their Lordships would do on this as they had done on former occasions—namely, insert what they conceived to be a proper compensation; and if the other House thought that their ideal privileges were invaded, let them reject the measure, and introduce a new one that would meet the justice of the case. Compensation had been granted to the clerk of the justices of the county of Warwick, who stood in the same situation that this gentleman did; and he did not see any reason why the latter, who was undoubtedly a meritorious officer, should not also be compensated.

The Marquess of *Normanby* complained of the course that had been taken on this occasion. Their Lordships having affirmed the intention of the framers of this Bill in the other House by the second division on Friday last, he believed there was not one of their Lordships who did not understand that nothing further was to be done, with reference to the measure, beyond correcting an inaccuracy which had crept into the Bill, in consequence of the result of the first division on the same evening. Not the least notice had been given of any intention to introduce a contest on a point that had reference to what the noble and learned Lord was pleased to call the ideal privileges of the other House of Parliament. He denied that this gentleman had any just claim to com-

pensation. He was clerk to the stipendiary magistrates—he was removeable at pleasure—and, was it ever known that compensation was granted to an individual thus situated? In his view of the case, this gentleman had not in justice any claim to compensation.

Lord *Abinger* conceived that this was a case in which compensation ought to be granted. It was allowed with reference to the clerk of the magistrates of the county of Warwick, and could not justly be withheld in this.

The Earl of *Radnor* said, it was understood, he thought, that this subject would not again be renewed and discussed, and he believed the noble Earl (Wilton) said so while on his legs. It was said, that justice should be done to the individual in question. But would it be doing justice to Birmingham and Manchester to throw out this bill? He could not see much justice in the amendment of the noble Earl.

The Earl of *Warwick* stated, that when the bill was in the other House, the chairman of the Warwick quarter sessions, who was a Member of that House, proposed a clause to give compensation to the persons claiming it, in the same manner as under the Municipal Corporation Act, but to that fair and reasonable proposition the Government objected. He thought their Lordships would establish a very bad precedent by passing the bill in its present shape.

The Marquess of *Salisbury* denied, that there was any understanding to the effect stated by the noble Earl (Earl Radnor) opposite. The Government endeavoured to press the bill forward, on Friday, and forced a second division upon the same amendment.

The Marquess of *Normanby* repeated, that it was his impression, that the subject would not be renewed to-night, and asserted that the second division was not upon the same amendment.

The Earl of *Wicklow* had voted against the amendment of his noble Friend (the Earl of Wilton) on the occasion alluded to, but he must say, that he fully expected and believed, that his noble Friend would take the course that he had taken this evening. He should again vote against his noble Friend, though not without great pain; but he did not think sufficient reasons had been shown for the rejection of the measure.

The question having been put,

The Marquess of *Normanby* rose to apprise their Lordships, that the effect of agreeing to the amendment would be to alter a money clause; and without wishing to insist upon any fancied privileges of the House of Commons, he thought their Lordships would admit, that they had no power to do any such thing.

Lord *Lyndhurst* said, the only object of the amendment was to exclude *Manchester* from the operation of the bill. It was not a substantive or positive proposition to insert or strike out a money clause. Surely their Lordships' privileges were not to be so much restricted as to prevent them giving their decision upon such an amendment as that proposed by the noble Earl.

Their Lordships divided on the Earl of *Wilton's* motion. Contents 70; Not-Contents 36: Majority 34.

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<i>Verulam</i>	<i>Wharnclyff.</i>

#### List of the NOT-CONTENTS.

DUKE.	MARQUESSSES.
<i>Bedford</i>	<i>Breadalbane</i>

*Clanricarde*  
*Headfoot*  
*Lansdowne*  
*Normanby*  
*Westminster.*

#### EARLS.

*Aylesford*  
*Clarendon*  
*Ilchester*  
*Leitrim*  
*Morley*  
*Radnor*  
*Stradbroke*  
*Warwick*  
*Wicklow*  
*Yarborough*  
*Zelland.*

#### VISCOUNTS.

*Duncannon*

*Melbourne.*

#### BARONS.

*Barham*  
*Bateman*  
*Belhaven*  
*Beaumont*  
*Brougham*  
*Calthorpe*  
*Colborne*  
*Cottenham*  
*De Freyne*  
*Denman*  
*Dunally*  
*Mostyn*  
*Portman*  
*Stafford*  
*Wenlock*  
*Wrottesley*

Proviso added to the bill. Bill passed.

POOR-LAWS (IRELAND).] The Marquess of *Westmeath* wished to ask the noble Marquess, the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it was the intention of the Government to retain Mr. *Nicholls*, Mr. *Hawley*, Mr. *Hancock*, and Mr. *Phelan*, in their offices after the evidence which had been produced before their Lordships respecting them.

The Marquess of *Normanby* said, that Mr. *Stanley*, as he had already informed their Lordships, had resigned, and with regard to the other Gentlemen mentioned by the noble Marquess, he begged to inform him that there existed no intention on the part of the Government to remove them from their offices.

The Marquess of *Westmeath* wished the Government much joy of their employés.

Adjourned.

#### HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, June 21, 1841.

MINUTES.] Bills. Read a third time:—Bills of Exchange; Loan Societies.

Petitions presented. By Sir R. Inglis, from Skillington, and four other places, and by Colonel Perceval, from Fillingham, against any Alteration of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Dennistoun, from Glasgow, Mearns, Thornlie Bank, Govan, Crosbie, Barrhead, etc. (126 petitions), by Mr. Villiers, from Fenny Stratford, Stony Stratford, Little Hampden, and a great number of other places, by Mr. Leader, from various parts of the Metropolis, and from Leicester, by Mr. Thornely, from various parts of the Metropolis, and by Mr. Walker, from the Districts around London, for the Abolition of the Corn-laws.—By Mr. Plumptre, from Stoke Gekling, against the Grant to Maynooth.—By Mr. Hindley, from Burnbank, for the Revision of the Tariff.—By Mr. Rich, from Kentish Town, for a Reduction of the Duty on Corn, Sugar, and Timber.

ABORIGINES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.] Mr. *Hindley* begged to call the attention of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies to a petition which had been presented on a former evening from the Society for the protection of the Aborigines in the British Colonies. That petition complained that two natives of South Australia had been hanged for the alleged murder of two Europeans, and that no sufficient proof of their guilt had been adduced; that in fact they had not had a fair trial, and that their execution under such circumstances was little short of murder, and was, therefore, not at all calculated to answer the only end for which punishment was intended—namely, the prevention of crime. He wished to know from the noble Lord (Lord J. Russell) whether (as we understood) any steps had been taken on the subject by the Colonial Department?

Lord J. Russell was understood to say, that the parties alluded to had been fairly tried, and that there was a protector of aborigines in the colony, who would, of course take cognizance of the affair.

Mr. *Hindley* asked of what use was a protector of aborigines, with a salary of 400*l.* a-year, if such scenes were suffered to pass with impunity.

Conversation at an end.

IDOLATRY IN INDIA.] Sir R. *Inglis*, observing the President of the Board of Control in his place, wished to ask him a question relative to the connection of the East India Company with idolatry in India. In doing so, he did not mean to say that nothing had been done by Government on the subject; on the contrary, he could not but compliment the right hon. Baronet on the progress which the question had made since last year. He wished now to know whether the right hon. Baronet could state whether any measures were in progress, or whether he was prepared to recommend the adoption of any measures, so as speedily to ensure the entire separation of the connection between the East-India Government and the local concerns of the idolatrous temples in India.

Sir J. *Hobhouse* said, in answer to the question put to him, he had the satisfaction of stating, that he had received by the last mail a memorandum from India on the subject, in a postscript of which it was stated, that the board of

revenue had been called on by the Government to report in what districts pagodas existed, the management of the affairs of which might be intrusted to persons professing the same faith as those to whom the pagodas belonged, subject to the control of the Zemindars, but without the necessity of submitting their accounts to any of the official collectors. The right hon. Baronet would see, that if these inquiries of Government were fairly carried out, the objectionable connection which he had alluded to would altogether cease. He need hardly assure the right hon. Baronet, that no exertion on his part should be wanting to carry the inquiry into effect, and that he should immediately express his satisfaction at the inquiry which had been instituted, and his desire, that no time might be lost in bringing it to a conclusion.

Subject at an end.

MR. WARNER'S INVENTION.] \*Mr. *Wakley* rose to call the attention of the House to a subject which had been brought under its notice on a former evening. When he first directed attention to the subject of Mr. Warner's most important discovery of a projectile of extraordinary powers, and stated the great hardship of that gentleman's treatment by the Admiralty, he found that the sympathy of the House went greatly with him, and that there was a still stronger sympathy expressed out of doors on the subject; finding this, and after the articles which had appeared in the *Times* on the subject, and the remarks of the noble Lord (Lord Ingestrie), the Member for South Staffordshire, he felt, that he ought not to allow the matter to rest where it was. After all that had been stated of this most important discovery—after the investigation of and reports on it by Admirals Sir Robert Keates and Sir Thomas Hardy, he owned he could not but express his great surprise and regret, that the Admiralty should have treated the question with such neglect. Two years were suffered to elapse, without anything further having been done on the subject. In that interval, Mr. Warner went on the continent, and on his return, found Sir J. Graham at the head of the Admiralty. It was, at first, proposed to bring the subject forward by a motion in the House of Commons, but that was stopped by Sir J. Graham, who deemed it prudent to avoid a public dis-

cussion, and he appointed a committee of naval and military officers to inquire into the matter; but this was retarded by a change in the Administration. Sir R. Stopford, the intended president of the committee, thought it too numerous, and before a smaller board could be constituted he left England to assume the command of the fleet in the Mediterranean. The attention of the Government was at length again called to the subject, and Lord Melbourne was willing to leave the matter to the Admiralty. It was then referred to Lieutenant Webster of the Royal Navy, who made a report on it to the Admiralty:—

“The report to the Admiralty was made (said Mr. Walesby, in his pamphlet), on the 16th of September, 1839; and on the 18th of January, 1840, Mr. Warner learned with amazement, from the hon. Mr. Cowper, Lord Melbourne's private secretary, that no report had been received from the Admiralty on the subject. How easily may ten years be frittered away, without any *laches* on the part of an applicant, under a state of things where such delays are of ordinary occurrence? When a respectful remonstrance was addressed to the Admiralty, the reply in excuse for this silence was, that Lieutenant Webster's report contained no data or explanation whence an independent opinion could be formed of the nature or merits of the discoveries and inventions in question. Of course not, else why was the intervention of a third party between the Prime Minister and the Admiralty required? Sir William Parker said, the report contained only Lieutenant Webster's opinion. That officer was requested by Lord Melbourne's private secretary, and Mr. Warner to give no more than his opinion of results.”

But surely it would not be said, that this was a proper mode of transacting the public business of so important a department. The statements in the *Times*, and in the able pamphlet of Mr. Walesby, the barrister, confirmed as they were by the observations of the noble Lord (Lord Ingestrie) were of such importance, that he felt, that the public would not be satisfied, if the matter were allowed to rest where it was. What he now wanted, was a copy of the report of Mr. Webster, which he would read. The hon. Member here read the following extract:—

“28 B, Manchester-street, Manchester-square, Oct. 10 1839.

“My Lord,—I beg to inform your Lordship that the principle and practice of the various projects of which Captain Warner is the in-

ventor, having been fully shown and explained to me by that gentleman, and being most thoroughly satisfied of their effectiveness, an outline of the same project was, on Monday, the 16th of September last, duly reported by me to Sir William Parker, with an urgent request on my part that, seeing the extreme importance of the matter, not a moment's delay might be incurred in laying the whole before your Lordship, together with my distinctly expressed opinion, that their merits are so extraordinary as to vest the absolute sovereignty of the seas in the hands of the first power that shall adopt them. I am fully convinced that it is utterly impossible for any thing that floats to resist them for a single moment, either close quarters or any given distance, even to a range of five or six miles. The strongest fortifications in Europe could not withstand these extraordinary powers for a single hour. In river ways and against stockades, as in India, the largest armies would be annihilated without a chance of escape; and the most difficult mountain passes would be utterly untenable against their operation. The country would thus be rendered impregnable, for 100 sail of the line would be useless against a single vessel so constructed; and, whenever it should be necessary to call this power into action, its effects could be attained by a trifling expense, and at the shortest notice. I submit, however, to your Lordship, that the invention should lie dormant until a case of emergency, and that the secret should be confined to the projector, the Crown, and your Lordship's own breast; not a whisper of its existence should be suffered to get abroad. I solemnly declare to your Lordship, that I consider the whole country deeply indebted to Captain Warner for these inventions, were they to cost the nation five times what he asks for them; and not less gratitude is due to him for the patience, forbearance, and self-denial he has shown, when, with so mighty a secret in his bosom, his own interests would have been established in any other land by the least disclosure. I therefore, earnestly entreat your Lordship no longer to neglect a man upon whom the existence of the country depends.

“I have the honour to be, &c.,

“W. WEBSTER, Lieutenant (A.) R.N.

“Right hon. Lord Viscount Melbourne.”

He should also wish for the production of the letter of Lieutenant Webster to Admiral Sir W. Parker, of which he read an extract:—

“I beg permission to refer you once more to my report of the 10th of October last, to Lord Melbourne, which perfectly agrees with all I had the honour to state to yourself before Sir John Pechell, in the interview alluded to of the 16th of September last, and to repeat in writing my solemn pledge and assurance as a gentleman, an officer of her Majesty's navy, and a British subject, anxious for the interests

of his country, that every word and sentence of the report in question is perfectly and entirely true, and that the existence of the British nation, with every interest attached to it, depends on the hands into which the inventions of Captain Warner shall fall, and I beg to add, that the responsibility of any further delay is not mine, but must rest with those who may ultimately have to answer for it to the British nation. Retaining a copy of this communication, I have the honour to be, Sir, with the highest estimation, your very humble servant.

"WILLIAM WEBSTER, Lieutenant (A) R.N.

"To Admiral Sir William Parker, K.C.B."

Now, this opinion of a Gentleman appointed to investigate the matter by the sanction of Lord Melbourne, was entitled to more attention than had been paid to it by the Admiralty. If it should be objected that Mr. Warner was an enthusiast or an impostor, it could not be said, that Mr. Webster was one. He had fought in seventeen engagements, and had been selected for his great skill and experience. Captain Warner, he must say, had been very ill treated, but there was another party who had been worse treated, he meant the British public, who were deeply interested in this important discovery, which, however, had been regarded by the Admiralty as if it were the project of some wild and visionary enthusiast. Indeed, this neglect of the Admiralty was illustrated by the non-attendance on this motion, of which due notice had been given, of any one connected with the Admiralty Board. It was objected by some, that this discovery of Mr. Warner proposed to do that which was impossible. It did nothing of the kind, though no doubt what he proposed would by many be so considered. If a man a century ago had proposed to accomplish the voyage from England to New York in eleven days, or if he said that he had invented a mode of conveyance by which a man breakfasting in Manchester, might on the same day dine in London, and go on the same evening to the House of Commons, and deliver a speech which he had fabricated and arranged in the carriage—if a man proposed to do this a century ago, would he not have been set down as a madman, to whose wild speculation no attention should be paid? But we have seen all those things accomplished, and now ceased to wonder at them. He had already mentioned the high testimony borne to the extraordinary powers of this projectile by many most competent judges. Let him

add, that the last experiment was made in the presence (amongst others) of Sir R. Peel, Sir H. Hardinge, and Sir G. Murray, Sir F. Burdett, and Lord Ingestrie. What was the testimony borne to Mr. Warner's ability by Sir G. Murray?

"He is himself a man whose frankness of manner, intelligent conversation, and whole deportment, are of a nature to inspire confidence; and whose practical knowledge affords a strong guarantee (in addition to the experiments he has actually exhibited) that his expectations will be, to a very great extent, at least, if not wholly, accomplished."

He had no knowledge of this matter himself, but from communications which he had had with a distinguished naval officer, it appeared to him that the statements in the *Times*, in Mr. Walesby's pamphlet, and in the remarks of the noble Lord (Lord Ingestrie,) instead of being above, were rather below the reality as to the powers of Mr. Warner's discovery. He was therefore most anxious, for the sake of justice—for the sake of the country, that this most deserving individual should be rescued from the hands of the Admiralty. He did not blame Lord Melbourne, but he certainly did think that much blame was due to the Lords of the Admiralty in having so long neglected so important a subject. He had heard it said, that a foreign state had offered Mr. Warner the sum of 300,000*l.*, and if the statements made in these discussions, should go forth to the continent, as no doubt they would, they would produce offers of a much higher sum, but from what he knew of Mr. Warner he had no fears on that head. His attachment to his country, and his devotion to its interests, were a sure guarantee that he would not, for any pecuniary reward, to any amount, transfer to a foreign state a secret which was of so much importance to his own country. At the same time, he ought not to be exposed to such temptation. All that he asked for Mr. Warner was, that justice should be done to him, and if the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, would only intimate the intention of Government to take the subject into consideration in the next Session, he would be satisfied, and not press his motion. The hon. Member concluded by moving,

"That there be laid before the House, copies of any correspondence between the First Lord of the Treasury and Mr. Warner

relative to a certain discovery said to be applicable to naval and military tactics. Also a copy of any report from Lieutenant Webster, R. N., on the same subject."

Lord J. Russell said, that he was but very imperfectly informed on the subject to which the hon. Gentleman's motion referred, and he regretted the absence of his hon. Friends connected with the Admiralty Board, who could have put the House in possession of those details with which he (Lord J. Russell) was unacquainted. He hoped the House would not agree to the motion until some explanations were given, for he did think the production of the documents referred to, might not be advantageous to the public interests. As to the appointment of Lieutenant Webster, he understood it was not made either by his noble Friend, at the head of the Treasury, or by the Board of Admiralty. He had offered himself to investigate the matter, as the friend of Mr. Warner, and his offer was accepted, but his report could not be received as an official authority, or any thing more than an expression of his own individual opinion. He had always understood that the point on which the negotiations were broken off was some difference as to the method of communicating the means by which the proposed results were to be accomplished. At the Admiralty, it was thought that these effects might be produced by means with which they were already acquainted, though by a different application, and that they should be put more fully into possession of the details. He agreed that some explanation ought to be given on the subject, that would be satisfactory to the House and the country, and that further negotiations relative to it should be gone into.

Sir R. Inglis owed it to Mr. Warner to state, that he had seen two letters from individuals who were second only to the Duke of Wellington as military authorities and who declared themselves strongly in favour of Mr. Warner's Invention. He hoped, however, that the hon. Member for Finsbury, after what had fallen from the noble Lord opposite, would not press his motion.

Viscount Ingestrie regretted that so little attention should have been paid by the Board of Admiralty to a subject of such high national importance; and that not even one Member connected with that board should be present on this occasion. The whole subject had been grievously neglected, and he must say,

that much blame attached somewhere for the matter not receiving that consideration which it demanded, and which now risked its loss to the country through the apathy of the Government. It had been said, that Mr. Warner and Lieutenant Webster were enthusiasts or madmen on this subject, and for all he knew, the same might have been said of himself; but, for all that, he would boldly assert that this was a discovery, the proper use of which would be of the most vital importance to the country. If the whole of the circumstances, if the total neglect with which the discovery had been treated, were fully known to the public, he had no doubt that they would have a powerful effect on the appeal now about to be made by the Government to the country. After the best consideration that he was enabled to give to the question, he would repeat what he said on a former evening, that enough had been shown to warrant a demand that the subject should be most fully investigated, and he would also repeat, that Mr. Warner was entitled to the gratitude of the country for those high and patriotic feelings with which he had refused great pecuniary advantages for imparting to other states the secret which he now possessed. He should be sorry if any discussions or investigations should be gone into in that House, which might excite the attention of other powers, and possibly have the effect of making the inventor exorbitant in his demands. As to the appointment of Lieutenant Webster, the noble Lord was mistaken in supposing that it took place, because he was the friend of Mr. Warner. The fact was, that on the report of Sir Richard Keates, and Sir Thomas Hardy being made, it was suggested that it should not be acted upon till the Government had had also the opinion of some practical naval man. Lieutenant Webster was then selected, and Mr. Warner had never seen him until a few days before he was appointed. But it was quite clear that the Admiralty had always looked on the plan as visionary, and were not disposed to give it a full and fair trial, so little so, indeed, that after Lieutenant Webster's report had been received and approved of, he was treated by the Admiralty as if he had been a co-conspirator in forwarding Mr. Warner's plan; but he repeated that he was only known to Mr. Warner five days before his appointment. It was objected to Lieutenant Webster,



that his report dealt only in generals ; Lieutenant Webster, however, could not have done otherwise without stating the very thing which was to be kept secret, nor could he now go into any detail on the subject without incurring the same risk. Looking at the whole case, he did trust that the attention of the Government would not be withdrawn from a due consideration of a matter of such deep importance to the country.

Mr. Cowper said, that in reference to the point just alluded to by the noble Lord, he begged to state, that when Captain Warner applied to Lord Melbourne, he was told, that the subject to which his application referred was a matter rather for the Admiralty, than for the Treasury, and he (Mr. Cowper) suggested to him the propriety of an application to the Lords of the Admiralty. He had himself had an interview with Captain Warner on the subject, and said to him, that it would be satisfactory that some person connected with the Royal Navy should speak as to the advantages of the invention, and upon that, Captain Warner himself suggested—as he (Mr. Cowper) understood as a friend of his—Lieutenant Webster, who was acquainted to some extent with the nature of the invention, and he believed that Lieutenant Webster actually went to the Admiralty as the friend of Captain Warner, and not as a person selected or nominated as an umpire, either by the Lords of the Admiralty or by Lord Melbourne. He also believed, that the reason why the interview at the Admiralty was not more satisfactory to Captain Warner arose from the circumstance, that he would not comply with the conditions which the Lords of the Admiralty wished to affix to the explanation of his invention, and he rather thought, also, that some doubt had arisen as to the number of persons to whom such explanation was to be referred. At all events, in his interview with Captain Warner, he had offered to him, to refer the inquiry into the nature and character of the invention to a committee of engineer officers. That offer, was however declined, and therefore the reason why the invention had not been inquired into was, because Captain Warner would not accede to the terms and manner of the inquiry. He (Mr. Cowper) could not help thinking that this was an unfortunate mode of introducing such a subject, and he regretted that the present motion should

have been brought forward. He trusted, however, that the hon. Member for Finsbury would not press it, or persevere in moving for the correspondence. It seemed to be admitted, that the invention ought to be kept secret, and the production of any correspondence would only serve to create publicity. As to the correspondence between the First Lord of the Treasury and Captain Warner, it was so immaterial as not to be worth moving for, and therefore, that motion ought to be opposed. As to the report of Lieutenant Webster, it was not official, and therefore ought not to be produced. It was the mere report made by a friend of the inventor, and not that of a person empowered to act as umpire in the matter.

Viscount Ingestrie begged to ask the hon. Member for Hertford whether Lieutenant Webster had not been approved of both by the Admiralty, and by Lord Melbourne?

Mr. W. F. Cowper: I think they approved of him, but not as an umpire.

Mr. Plumptre said, he was sure the House ought not to be satisfied, as he was sure the country would not be satisfied, unless some assurance was given by the noble Lord opposite, or by some other Member of the Government, that the benefit of this marvellous invention should not be lost to this country, but that measures would immediately be taken to secure that benefit. As so much had now transpired and become known with respect to this invention, he must say, that he thought it became the noble Lord opposite, or somebody else connected with the Government, to assure the House and the country, that Captain Warner, who had already been treated with the greatest neglect, would not have that neglect longer continued.

Mr. Wakley replied. The explanation of the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies was, to a certain extent, satisfactory to him, though he should have been much better pleased if the noble Lord had known more upon the subject. The noble Lord, however, could not be expected to know everything. The noble Lord had spoken of the impropriety of publishing the correspondence. Now, he did not know what that correspondence contained. He had never seen Captain Warner, nor held any communication with him, and his only reason for

bringing the matter forward was, that Captain Warner might understand that in the House of Commons there was a sympathy felt for him, if there was none at the Admiralty. He had been most desirous that some other Member more competent than himself to do justice to the subject should have brought it forward, and he could appeal to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Ingestrie) whether he had not endeavoured to induce other hon. Members to do so. In that effort, however, he had failed. As Mr. Walesby in his pamphlet had expressed a hope that some Member would bring the matter under the consideration of the House, and believing from that expression that Captain Warner and his friends had lost all hope of succeeding with the Admiralty, he had felt it his duty, failing in his efforts to induce others to do so, to notice it. Now, a great deal had been said about keeping this matter a secret. But was not the invention already well known? Why, in the first place, besides Mr. Walesby's pamphlet, it had been noticed so long ago as August last in reports in *The Times* newspaper, and those reports had attracted the attention of the whole world. They had been repeated three or four times, and in February last that journal gave an account of experiments made on the invention in the presence of Sir R. Peel, of Sir H. Hardinge, and of Sir G. Murray, and thus a publicity had been given to it greater than any notice in this House. In his judgment, instead of secrecy in the matter, the best plan was to let foreign nations know that this country possessed such a secret, and then they would not be so ready to assail the British fleets. The best way to preserve life and power was to let people know that this country was prepared to defend both. After what the noble Lord, the Secretary for the Colonies, had stated, he (Mr. Wakley) would not press his motion, but he sincerely hoped the matter would be taken up in a future Parliament by some other person. He might not be there to give the noble Lord any trouble about it—he hoped he might, for he thought there had been great carelessness and neglect on the part of the Government, and he thought it was the duty of the Government, probably of the noble Lord himself, to institute a rigid inquiry into what had been done in the matter, and to take immediate steps in it. If not, he (Mr. Wakley) was sure, that

great dissatisfaction would arise in the public mind.

Motion withdrawn.

**BRIBERY AT ELECTIONS.]** Lord *J. Russell*, in moving the House to agree to the Lords' Amendments in the Bribery at Elections Bill, expressed his regret that the bill should have been so much altered as only to leave one clause of the many sent up from this House. He begged to observe, that it was utterly untrue, as had been suggested, that this measure had been produced without due consideration. The bill was framed upon a measure introduced some years ago by the right hon. Member for the county of Montgomery (Mr. C. W. Wynn), and had been introduced by him (Lord *J. Russell*) last Session. He regretted the omission of the clauses struck out by the Lords, because it would prevent that searching inquiry which was necessary in questions of bribery. However, there still remained in the bill as sent down one clause which settled a point upon which there had been so much difference of opinion in election committees—he alluded to the point as to the proof of agency before acts of bribery were admissible in evidence, and, therefore, though so much of the bill had been struck out, he was willing to accept the bill as amended, rather than lose the benefit and advantage of the small portion that remained.

Motion agreed to.

**DANISH CLAIMS.]** Lord *J. Russell* appeared at the Bar with her Majesty's answer to the address of this House on the subject of the Danish claims, which the noble Lord read as follows:—

“VICTORIA R.

“It must at all times be my most earnest desire to attend to the wishes of the House of Commons, and I shall be ready to give effect to them in this instance, whenever the means shall have been provided by Parliament.”

On the motion of the noble Lord, her Majesty's most gracious answer was ordered to be entered on the journals.

Adjourned.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, June 22, 1841.

PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT.] Her

Majesty went in state this day to the House of Lords. Being seated on the Throne, the Speaker and Members of the House of Commons were summoned to the Bar by the Usher of the Black Rod.

The *Speaker* addressed her Majesty as follows:—Most Gracious Sovereign, we your Majesty's faithful Commons, approach your Majesty with sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty. In granting the supplies for the service of the present year, it has been our anxious desire to place at the disposal of your Majesty the means whereby your Majesty's naval and military establishment may be upheld in complete efficiency both at home and abroad; and we feel a strong conviction, that in thus enabling your Majesty to maintain the honour of your Majesty's Crown, and to protect the just interests of your Majesty's subjects, we have adopted a course which, under the favour of Divine Providence, is best calculated to secure for this country and the world the continued blessings of peace. We now tender to your Majesty an act to apply certain sums of money for the service of the year 1841, and to appropriate the supplies granted in this Session of Parliament, to which in all humility, we pray your Majesty's gracious assent.

The royal assent having been given, in the usual form, to the following bills:—Appropriation, Militia Pay, the Bills of Exchange, Punishment of Death, Bribery at Elections, Controverted Elections Trial, Highway Rates, Loan Societies, Mad Houses (Scotland), and some other private Bills, her Majesty then read the following Speech:—

*" My Lords and Gentlemen,*

" On a full consideration of the present state of public affairs, I have come to the determination of proroguing Parliament, with a view to its immediate dissolution.

" The paramount importance of

the trade and industry of the country, and my anxiety that the exigencies of the public service should be provided for in the manner least burdensome to the community, have induced me to resort to the means which the constitution has entrusted to me, of ascertaining the sense of my people upon matters which so deeply concern their welfare.

" I entertain the hope that the progress of public business may be facilitated, and that divisions, injurious to the course of steady policy and useful legislation, may be removed by the authority of a new Parliament, which I shall direct to be summoned without delay.

*" Gentlemen of the House of Commons,*

" I thank you for the readiness with which you have voted the sums necessary for the civil and military establishments.

*" My Lords and Gentlemen,*

" In the exercise of my prerogative, I can have no other object than that of securing the rights and promoting the interests of my subjects; and I rely on the co-operation of my Parliament, and the loyal zeal of my people, for support in the adoption of such measures as are necessary to maintain that high station among the nations of the world which it has pleased Divine Providence to assign to this country."

The *Lord Chancellor* said, it is her Majesty's royal will and pleasure that this Parliament be prorogued to Tuesday, the 29th of June instant, to be then here holden, and this Parliament is accordingly prorogued till Tuesday, the 29th of June.

Her Majesty and her attendants retired, and the Peers separated.

## HOUSE OF COMMONS,

*Tuesday, June 22, 1841.*

MINUTES.] Petitions presented. By Sir R. Inglis, from Upper Chelsea, and Mr. Dugdale, from Birmingham, for Church Extension.—By Sir John Hobhouse, from a place in Wiltshire, and by Mr. Hawes, from several places, for the Repeal of the Corn-laws.

PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT.] The

House of Commons was summoned to the House of Peers. The Speaker accordingly, accompanied by the Members present, repaired to the House of Lords, and, after a short time, returned, when the right hon. Gentleman read her Majesty's Speech to the Members present [for which see *ante*, p. 1595], after which the House broke up.

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## DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT.

**¶** *The Parliament was Dissolved by Proclamation on the following day, and a New Parliament summoned to meet on August 19th.*

END OF THE FOURTH AND LAST SESSION OF THE THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT.

A

## TABLE

OF

All the STATUTES passed in the FOURTH Session of the THIRTEENTH  
Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

4° & 5° VICT.

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### PUBLIC GENERAL ACTS.

- i. **A**N Act to settle an Annuity on Lord Keane, and the Two next surviving Heirs Male of the Body of the said Lord Keane to whom the Title of Lord Keane shall descend, in consideration of his great and Brilliant Services.
- ii. An Act for punishing Mutiny and Desertion, and for the better payment of the Army and their Quarters.
- iii. An Act for the Regulation of Her Majesty's Royal Marine Force while on shore.
- iv. An Act to apply the Sum of Eight Millions out of the Consolidated Fund to the Service of the Year One thousand eight hundred and forty-one.
- v. An Act to facilitate the Recovery of Arrears of Tithe Compositions in *Ireland*, vested in Her Majesty under the Provisions of an Act of the First and Second Years of Her present Majesty, for abolishing Compositions for Tithes in *Ireland*, and for substituting Rent-charges in lieu thereof.
- vi. An Act to continue, until the Fourth Day of *August* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and to the End of the next Session of Parliament, the several Acts for regulating Turnpike Roads in *Ireland* which will expire at or before the End of the present Session of Parliament, or at or before the end of the Session of Parliament next after the Fourth Day of *August* One thousand eight hundred and forty-one; and to amend the Acts for regulating Turnpike Roads in *Ireland*.
- vii. An Act to amend the Acts of the last Session for taking Account of the Population.
- viii. An Act to reduce the Duty on Rum and Rum Shrub the Produce of and imported from certain *British* Possessions in the *East Indies* into the United Kingdom.
- ix. An Act for removing Doubts as to the continuance of certain Local Turnpike Acts.
- x. An Act for extending to the County of the City of *Dublin* the Provisions of an Act passed in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Years of His late Majesty King *George the Third*, in *Ireland*, intituled *An Act to prevent the detestable Practices of houghing Cattle, burning of Houses, Barns, Haggards, and Corn, and for other Purposes so far as relates to burning of Houses*.
- xi. An Act to indemnify such Persons in the United Kingdom as have omitted to qualify themselves for Offices and Employments, and to extend the Time limited for those Purposes respectively until the Twenty-fifth Day of *March* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two; and for the Relief of Clerks to Attornies and Solicitors in certain Cases.
- xii. An Act to enable Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods to make a new Street from *Coventry Street, Piccadilly, to Long Acre*, and for other Improvements in the Metropolis.
- xiii. An Act to authorize the Advance of a Sum of Money out of the Consolidated Fund on account of the Colony of *South Australia*.
- xiv. An Act to make good certain Contracts which have been or may be entered into by certain Banking and other Co-partnerships.
- xv. An Act for the Erection at *Edinburgh* of a Monument to the late *Sir Walter Scott*.
- xvi. An Act to enable the Commissioners of Wide Streets to sell, and Her Majesty to purchase, certain Hereditaments in the City of *Dublin* on the North Bank of the River *Anna Liffey*.
- xvii. An Act to abolish Arrest in personal Actions commenced by Process of Subpœna at the Law Side of the Court of Exchequer in *Ireland*.
- xviii. An Act to make further Provision for facilitating and completing the Distribution and Payment of Compensation for Slaves upon the Abolition of Slavery.
- xix. An Act for raising the Sum of Eleven Millions by Exchequer Bills, for the Service of the Year One thousand eight hundred and forty-one.

## PUBLIC GENERAL ACTS.

- xx. An Act to alter and amend certain Laws relating to the Collection and Management of the Duties of Excise.
- xxi. An Act for rendering a Release as effectual for the Conveyance of Freehold Estates as a Lease and Release by the same Parties.
- xxii. An Act to remove Doubts as to the Liability of Lords and Peers of Parliament to Punishment in certain cases of Felony.
- xxiii. An Act to suspend until the Thirty-first Day of *August* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two the making of Lists and the Ballots and Enrolments for the Militia of the United Kingdom.
- xxiv. An Act to amend an Act to grant certain Powers to Heirs of Entail in *Scotland*, and to authorize the Sale of Entailed Lands for the Payment of certain Debts affecting the same.
- xxv. An Act to amend and continue for One Year, and to the End of the then next Session of Parliament, the several Acts relating to the Importation and keeping of Arms and Gunpowder in *Ireland*.
- xxvi. An Act to continue Compositions for Assessed Taxes until the Fifth Day of *April* One Thousand Eight hundred and forty-three.
- xxvii. An Act to enable Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods to complete the Contract for the Sale of *York House*, and to purchase certain Lands for a Royal Park.
- xxviii. An Act to prevent Plaintiffs in certain frivolous Actions from obtaining their full costs of Suit.
- xxix. An Act for granting to Her Majesty, until the Fifth Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, certain Duties on Sugar imported into the United Kingdom, for the Service of the Year One thousand eight hundred and forty-one.
- xxx. An Act to authorize and facilitate the completion of a Survey of *Great Britain*, *Berwick upon Tweed* and the *Isle of Man*.
- xxxi. An Act to provide for the Surrender of Premises formerly used for Court Houses, but no longer used for that Purpose, in *Ireland*.
- xxxii. An Act to amend an Act to extend the Practice of Vaccination.
- xxxiii. An Act to amend the Acts for Regulating Turnpike Roads in *England*, so far as they relate to certain Exemptions from Toll.
- xxxiv. An Act to explain and amend an Act of the Fifth Year of King *George* the Fourth, for repealing certain Duties on Law Proceedings in the Courts in *Great Britain* and *Ireland* respectively, and for better protecting the Duties payable upon stamped Vellum, Parchment, or Paper.
- xxxv. An Act for the Commutation of certain Manorial Rights in respect of Lands of Copyhold and Customary Tenure, and in respect of other Lands subject to such Rights, and for facilitating the Enfranchisement of such Lands, and for the Improvement of such Tenure.
- xxxvi. An Act to amend an Act of the Fifth and Sixth Years of King *William* the Fourth, "for the more easy Recovery of Tithes;" and to take away the Jurisdiction from the Ecclesiastical Courts in all Matters relating to Tithes of a certain Amount.
- xxxvii. An Act for the more easy Recovery of Arrears of Compositions for Tithes from Persons of the Persuasion of the People called Quakers, in *Ireland*.
- xxxviii. An Act to afford further Facilities for the Conveyance and Endowment of Sites for Schools.
- xxxix. An Act to explain and amend Two several Acts relating to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for *England*.
- xl. An Act to empower the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Woods to raise Money for certain Improvements in the Metropolis on the Security of the Land Revenues of the Crown within the County of *Middlesex* and City of *London*.
- xli. An Act to provide for the Payment of Debts, Charges, and Incumbrances affecting Houses of Industry and Workhouses, and of Advances made, conformable with previous Usage, for the lawful Purposes of such Houses of Industry and Workhouses, in certain Cases, in *Ireland*.
- xlii. An Act to remove Doubts as to the Division of the Parish of *Winterbourne* in the County of *Gloucester* into Two Parishes.
- xliii. An Act to continue until the Thirty-first Day of *December* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and until the End of the then next Session of Parliament, an Act of the Tenth Year of King *George* the Fourth, for providing for the Government of His Majesty's Settlements in *Western Australia* on the Western Coast of *New Holland*.
- xliv. An Act to continue until the Thirty-first Day of *December* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, and from thence until the End of the next ensuing Session of Parliament, certain Acts for providing for the Administration of Justice in *New South Wales* and *Van Diemen's Land*, and for the more effectual Government thereof.
- xlv. An Act to Amend an Act passed in the Third and Fourth Years of the Reign of His late Majesty King *William* the Fourth, intitled *An Act to amend the Laws relating to Sewers*.
- xlvi. An Act to empower the Commissioners for the Issue of Exchequer Bills for public Works to complete the Works authorized to be made by an Act of the Sixth and Seventh Years of His late Majesty King *William* the Fourth for improving the Navigation and Harbour of *Tralee* in the County of *Kerry*; and to extend the Time for that Purpose.
- xlvii. An Act to amend an Act of the last Session, for continuing and amending the Laws for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors in *Ireland*.
- xlviii. An Act to render certain Municipal Corporations rateable to the Relief of the Poor in certain Cases.
- xlix. An Act to provide for repairing, improving, and rebuilding County Bridges.
- i. An Act to make further Provision relative to the Returns to be made by Banks of the Amount of their Notes in Circulation.
- ii. An Act to Amend an Act of the Third Year of King *George* the Fourth, for regulating Turnpike Roads in *England*, and also an Act of the Fifth and Sixth Years of King *William* the Fourth, for Consolidating the Laws relating to Highways in *England*.
- iii. An Act to amend an Act of the Fourth Year of Her present Majesty, intitled *An Act for facilitating the Administration of Justice in the Court of Chancery*.
- liii. An Act to apply certain Sums of Money to the Service of the Year One thousand eight hundred and forty-one, and to appropriate the Supplies granted in this Session of Parliament.

## LOCAL AND PERSONAL ACTS.

- liv. An Act to continue until the First Day of *January* One thousand eight hundred and forty-four an Act of the last Session of Parliament, for continuing an Act for amending and extending the Provisions of an Act of the First Year of Her present Majesty, for exempting certain Bills of Exchange and Promissory Notes from the Operation of the Laws relating to Usury.
- lv. An Act further to continue, until the First Day of *April* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two, an Act of the Third and Fourth Year of the Reign of Her present Majesty, intituled *An Act to amend the Laws relating to Loan Societies*.
- lvi. An Act for taking away the Punishment of Death in certain Cases, and substituting other Punishments in lieu thereof.
- lvii. An Act for the Prevention of Bribery at Elections.
- lviii. An Act to amend the Law for the Trial of controverted Elections.
- lix. An Act to authorize for One Year, and until the End of the then next Session of Parliament, the Application of a Portion of the Highway Rates to Turnpike Roads, in certain Cases.
- lx. An Act to alter and amend certain Acts regulating Madhouses in *Scotland*, and to provide for the Custody of dangerous Lunatics.
- lxi. An Act to defray the Charge of the Pay, Clothing, and contingent and other Expenses of the Disembodied Militia in *Great Britain*, and *Ireland*, and to grant Allowances in certain Cases to Subaltern Officers, Adjutants, Paymasters, Quartermasters, Surgeons, Assistant Surgeons, Surgeons Mates, and Sergeant Majors of the Militia, until the First Day of *July* One thousand eight hundred and forty-two.

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## LOCAL AND PERSONAL ACTS,

DECLARED PUBLIC,

AND TO BE JUDICIALLY NOTICED.

- i. **A**N Act to amend the Acts relating to the *London and South-western Railway Company*.
- ii. An Act to enable the *Preston and Longridge Railway Company* to raise a further Sum of Money.
- iii. An Act to alter and amend the Powers and Provisions of an Act passed in the Seventh Year of the Reign of King *William* the Fourth, intituled *An Act for better paving, cleansing, lighting, watching, and improving the Town of Whitchy in the North Riding of the County of York*; and to allow a Drawback in certain Cases from the Duties thereby granted.
- iv. An Act for regulating Legal Proceedings by or against the *York and London Assurance Company*.
- v. An Act to enable "*The Glasgow, Paisley and Greenock Railway Company*" to raise a further Sum of Money; and to amend and enlarge the Powers and Provisions of the Acts relating to the said Railway.
- vi. An Act to enable the *Durham and Sunderland Railway Company* to raise a further Sum of Money; and for amending the Acts for making the said Railway.
- vii. An Act to enable the *York and North Midland Railway Company* to raise a further Sum of Money; to make a certain Approach to the said Railway; and to amend the Acts relating thereto.
- viii. An Act to enable the Company of Proprietors of the *Manchester and Salford Water-*
- works* to raise a further Sum of Money; and to amend the Acts relating thereto.
- ix. An Act for regulating Legal Proceedings by or against the *Britannia Life Assurance Company*.
- x. An Act to amend the Acts relating to the *Chard Canal*.
- xi. An Act for enabling the *Wishaw and Coltness Railway Company* to raise a further Sum of Money.
- xii. An Act for granting further Powers to the *London and Blackwall Railway Company*.
- xiii. An Act for granting further Powers to the *North Midland Railway Company*.
- xiv. An Act to amend and enlarge some of the Provisions of the Acts relating to the *Eastern Counties Railway*, and to authorize the Company to raise a further Sum of Money for the Purposes of the said Undertaking.
- xv. An Act for the better lighting with Gas the Borough of *Derby* and several Parishes and Places adjacent thereto.
- xvi. An Act for improving certain Parts of the Townships of *Bilton with Harrowgate and Pannal*, called *High and Low Harrowgate*, in the West Riding of the County of *York*; for protecting the Mineral Springs and regulating the Stinted Pasture in the said Townships.
- xvii. An Act for the Administration of the Poor-laws in the Parish of *Saint Luke Chelsea* in the County of *Middlesex*, and relating to the Highways in the said Parish.
- xviii. An Act for the more effectual Preserva-

## LOCAL AND PERSONAL ACTS.

- tion and Improvement of the Fisheries in the River *Annan* in the County of *Dumfries*, and in the Streams and Waters running into the same, and on the Shores or Sea Coast adjacent to the Mouth or Entrance of the said River.
- xix. An Act for more effectually repairing and improving certain Roads passing through or near the Town of *Ilminster* in the County of *Somerset*.
- xx. An Act for maintaining certain Roads in the County of *Cambridge*, to be called "The *Stumpcross Roads*."
- xxi. An Act for repairing several Roads leading from the Town of *Barnstaple* in the County of *Devon*, and for making several new Lines of Road connected therewith.
- xxii. An Act for more effectually repairing the Road from the Western Side of the *New Forest* near *Christchurch* to the Boundary of the Parish of *Lyndhurst*, all in the County of *Hants*.
- xxiii. An Act for making a Turnpike Road from *Wimborne Minster* in the County of *Dorset* to *Piddletown* in the same County, with certain Branches therefrom.
- xxiv. An Act to enable the *Northern and Eastern Railway Company* to make certain Deviations in the Line of their Railway, and to alter and amend the several Acts relating to the said Railway.
- xxv. An Act for enabling the *Manchester and Leeds Railway Company* to raise a further Sum of Money.
- xxvi. An Act to enable the *West Durham Railway Company* to raise a further Sum of Money; and to amend the Act relating to the said Railway.
- xxvii. An Act to light with Gas and supply with Water the Townships of *Old and New Accrington* and *Church* in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.
- xxviii. An Act to alter, amend, and enlarge the Powers and Provisions of an Act for lighting with Gas the Port and Town of *Liverpool* and Township of *Thurstle Park* in the County of *Lancaster*, and for lighting with Gas the several Townships of *West Derby*, *Everton*, *Kirkdale*, *Walton-on-the-Hill*, *Booth-cum-Linacre*, *Litherland*, *Great Crosby*, *Wavertree* and *Gorston* in the County of *Lancaster*.
- xxix. An Act for enlarging the Powers of the Acts for building a Bridge over the River *Avon*, from *Clifton* to the opposite Side of the River in the County of *Somerset*.
- xxx. An Act for enabling the Trustees of the *Liverpool Docks* to erect Transit Sheds on the West Quay of the *Prince's Dock*, to make a Wet Dock with Warehouses on the Quays, and to construct other Works, and to raise a further Sum of Money; and for enlarging the Powers of the Acts relating to the Docks and Harbour of *Liverpool*; and for other Purposes relating thereto.
- xxxi. An Act to repeal certain of the Provisions of an Act passed in the First Year of the Reign of His Majesty King *George the Fourth*, for improving Parts of the Line of Road between the Borough of *Plymouth* and the City of *Exeter*, through *Ashburton* and *Chudleigh*, in the County of *Devon*.
- xxxii. An Act for repairing the Road leading from *Brent Bridge* *Devon* to *Gusking Street* in or near the Borough of *Plymouth* in the said County.
- xxxiii. An Act for more effectually repairing the Road from *Cranford Bridge* to *Maidenhead Bridge*, with Roads thereout to *Eaton Town End* and to the *Great Western Railway*, and from *Langley Broom* to *Datchet Bridge*, all in the Counties of *Middlesex* and *Bucks*.
- xxxiv. An Act for repairing the Roads from *Coventry* to *Warwick*, and from *Coventry* to *Martyn's Gutter*, in the County of the City of *Coventry* and in the County of *Warwick*, and other Roads communicating therewith, in the said County of *Warwick*.
- xxxv. An Act for more effectually repairing and improving the Road from *Market Harborough* in the County of *Leicester* to *Brampton* in the County of *Huntingdon*.
- xxxvi. An Act for repressing Juvenile Delinquency in the City of *Glasgow*.
- xxxvii. An Act for completing and maintaining a new Church in *Birkenhead* in the County of *Chester*.
- xxxviii. An Act for amending and enlarging the Provisions of the several Acts relating to the *Great North of England Railway Company*; and for other Purposes relating thereto.
- xxxix. An Act to amend the Acts relating to the *London and South-western Railway Company*; and to authorize an Agreement between the said Company and certain Inhabitants of *Wandsworth* and *Battersea* respecting an alleged loss in their Supply of Water.
- xl. An Act for extending, enlarging, and amending some of the Provisions of the Act relating to the *Great Leitner and Munster Railway*.
- xli. An Act for extending and enlarging some of the Provisions of the Acts relating to the *Bristol and Exeter Railway*.
- xlii. An Act to enable the *Northern and Eastern Railway Company* to make a Branch Line of Railway; and to alter and amend the several Acts relating to the said Railway.
- xliii. An Act for making a Railway to be called the *Wileontown, Morningside, and Coltness Railway*, in the Counties of *Lanark* and *Linlithgow*.
- xliv. An Act to alter, amend, and enlarge the Powers granted to the *Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Carlisle Railway Company*; and to authorize Alterations in the Line of the Railway.
- xlv. An Act for improving and regulating the Markets within the City and Borough of *Wells* in the County of *Somerset*.
- xlvi. An Act to alter, amend, and enlarge the Powers and Provisions of an Act passed in the First Year of the Reign of Her present Majesty, intituled *An Act for regulating the Market in the Town of Exmouth in the County of Devon*.
- xlvii. An Act to alter and amend an Act passed in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of King *George the Third*, for the better regulation of Pilots and Bridgemen, and for laying down Moorings and preventing Mischief by Fire, in the Port of *King's Lynn*.
- xlviii. An Act to amend an Act for the Formation of a new Cut or Channel, and for otherwise more effectually improving the Port and Harbour of *Belfast*.
- xlix. An Act for maintaining *Gourdon Harbour* in the County of *Kincardine*.
- l. An Act for making and maintaining a Harbour



## LOCAL AND PERSONAL ACTS.

- at *Scarabster Roads* in the Bay of *Thurso* and County of *Caitness*, and Road thereto.
- li. An Act for authorizing the *Newport Dock Company* to raise an additional Sum of Money; and to amend the Acts relating thereto.
  - lii. An Act to enable the *Ipswich Dock Commissioners* to raise a further Sum of Money.
  - liii. An Act for making a Pier in the Parish of *Portbury* in the County of *Somerset*, with Works and Approaches connected therewith.
  - liv. An Act to enable the *Monkland Canal Company* to raise a further Sum of Money.
  - lv. An Act to consolidate, amend, and enlarge the Powers and Provisions of the several Acts relating to the *Forth* and *Clyde* Navigation.
  - lvi. An Act to extend and amend the Acts relating to the *Nevery* Navigation.
  - lvii. An Act to repeal an Act passed in the Sixteenth Year of the Reign of His Majesty King *George the Third*, for the Encouragement and Improvement of the *Pilchard* Fishery carried on within the Bay of *Saint Ives* in the County of *Cornwall*; and to make other Provisions in lieu thereof.
  - lviii. An Act for draining certain Fen Lands and Low Grounds in the Parish of *Burwell* in the County of *Cambridge*, and for improving the Navigation of the Lodes or Navigable Cuts passing through the same.
  - lix. An Act for amending the several Acts relating to the *Edinburgh* and *Glasgow* Union Canal, and for enlarging the *Cobbinshaw* Reservoir.
  - lx. An Act to amend an Act of Her present Majesty for making and maintaining a Reservoir at *Deanhead* in the Parish of *Huddersfield* in the West Riding of the County of *York*.
  - lxi. An Act to enable the *Wakefield Waterworks Company* to raise a further Sum of Money.
  - lxii. An Act for supplying *Birkenhead* and other Townships in the Hundred of *Wirrall* in the County of *Chester* with Gas; and for supplying *Birkenhead* aforesaid with Water.
  - lxiii. An Act to establish a general Cemetery for the Interment of the Dead in the Parishes of *Saint Dunstan Stepney* and *Saint Leonard Bromley* in the County of *Middlesex*.
  - lxiv. An Act for further extending the Powers of several Acts for enabling the Commissioners of Wide Streets, *Dublin*, to widen and improve certain Ways, Streets, and Passages in the City and County of *Dublin*, and for raising Funds to enable the said Commissioners to carry the same into execution.
  - lxv. An Act to alter, amend, and enlarge some of the Powers and Provisions of the Acts for paving and otherwise improving certain Streets in the Parish of *Saint Pancras* in the County of *Middlesex*.
  - lxvi. An Act for amending an Act passed in the Twenty-seventh Year of the Reign of King *George the Third*, for paving, cleansing, lighting, and watching the Streets and other public Passages and Places within the Walls of the City of *Canterbury* and the Liberties thereof, and other Places near the said City.
  - lxvii. An Act for paving, gravelling, lighting, cleansing, draining, and improving the Hamlet of *Kentish Town* and its Vicinity in the Parish of *Saint Pancras* in the County of *Middlesex*.
  - lxviii. An Act for paving, lighting, watching, cleansing, and otherwise improving the Town of *Middlebrough* and the Neighbourhood thereof, in the North Riding of the County of *York*, and for establishing a Market therein.
  - lxix. An Act for paving, cleansing, and otherwise improving the Town and Borough of *Stanford* in the Counties of *Lincoln* and *Northampton*.
  - lxx. An Act to authorize and provide for certain Improvements in the Town and Parish of *Walton-le-Soken* otherwise *Walton-on-the-Naze* in the County of *Essex*.
  - lxxi. An Act to alter and extend an Act passed in the First Year of the Reign of Her present Majesty, intituled *An Act for regulating and improving the Borough of Newcastle-upon-Tyne*.
  - lxxii. An Act for better assessing and collecting the Poor Rates in the Borough of *Kidderminster* in the County of *Worcester*.
  - lxxiii. An Act for the more easy and Speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the City and County of the City of *Exeter*.
  - lxxiv. An Act for extending the Jurisdiction of the *Hatfield* Court of Requests to certain Places in the West Riding of the County of *York* and in the Counties of *Lincoln* and *Nottingham*.
  - lxxv. An Act to extend the Jurisdiction of the *Kingston* Court of Requests, and to amend the Act relating thereto.
  - lxxvi. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town and Borough of *Lamouceston* and other Places in the Counties of *Cornwall* and *Devon*.
  - lxxvii. An Act for the more easy and Speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town of *Blackburn* and other Places in the County of *Lancaster*.
  - lxxviii. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town and Borough of *Wigan* and the Towns of *Charley* and *Ormskirk*, and other Places therein mentioned, in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.
  - lxxix. An Act to amend an Act of Her present Majesty, for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Borough of *Newark* and other Places in the Counties of *Nottingham* and *Lincoln*.
  - lxxx. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town of *Totnes* in the County of *Devon*, and other Places in the said County.
  - lxxxi. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within and adjoining the District called *The Staffordshire Potteries*.
  - lxxxii. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Towns of *Saint Helena* and *Prescot* and Places adjacent in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.
  - lxxxiii. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Towns of *Burnley* and *Colne* and Places adjacent in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.
  - lxxxiv. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the City and Borough of *New Sarum* and other Places in the Counties of *Wilt*, *Hants*, and *Dorset*.
  - lxxxv. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town of *New Steaford* in the County of *Lincoln*, and other Places in the same County.
  - lxxxvi. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town of *Gainsburgh* in the County of *Lincoln*, and other Places in the Counties of *Lincoln* and *Nottingham*.
  - lxxxvii. An Act for the more easy and speedy Recovery of Small Debts within the Town or Borough of *East Retford* in the County of *Not*

## LOCAL AND PERSONAL ACTS.

- tingham*, and other Places in the Counties of *Nottingham*, *York*, and *Lincoln*.
- lxxxviii. An Act to incorporate the Proprietors of the *Meerbrook Sough*, and to enable them to levy and raise certain Royalties, Dues, and Tolls for the Continuation and Maintenance thereof.
- lxxxix. An Act to enable "The Patent Rolling and Compressing Iron Company" to purchase certain Letters Patent, and to sue and be sued.
- xc. An Act for regulating legal Proceedings by or against "The *Rhymney* Iron Company," and for granting certain Powers thereto.
- xc. i. An Act for forming and establishing "*Stead's* Patent Wooden Paving Company," and to enable the said Company to purchase certain Letters Patent, and for confirming the same.
- xc. ii. An Act to enable the Church of *England* Life and Fire Assurance, Trust, and Annuity Company to sue and be sued in the name of the Managing Director or other Officer of the said Company.
- xc. iii. An Act for regulating legal Proceedings by or against the *Neptune* Marine Insurance Company.
- xc. iv. An Act for enabling "The Imperial Life Insurance Company" to alter the Mode of Appropriation of Profits directed by their Deed of Settlement, and for regulating legal Proceedings by or against the Company.
- xc. v. An Act for regulating legal Proceedings by or against "The *Hull* Flax and Cotton Mill Company."
- xc. vi. An Act to enable the "*Scottish* Marine Insurance Company" to sue and be sued; and for other Purposes.
- xc. vii. An Act for further and more effectually repairing and maintaining certain Turnpike Roads in the Counties of *Rosburgh* and *Dumfries*.
- xc. viii. An Act for more effectually widening and improving the Road from *Wells* to *Highbridge*, with a Road thereout to *Cheddar*, all in the County of *Somerset*.
- xc. ix. An Act for more effectually repairing and maintaining several Roads leading to and from the Town of *Bradford* in the County of *Wilts*, and for maintaining a Bridge over the River *Avon* at *Stokeford* in the said County.
- c. An Act for repairing the Roads leading from *Henley-upon-Thames* to *Culham Bridge*, and to the *Chancellor's Milestone* near *Magdalen Bridge*, in the County of *Oxford*.
- ci. An Act for repairing the Road from *Blake-down Pool* in the Parish of *Hagley* in the County of *Worcester* into the Borough of *Birmingham* in the County of *Warwick*.
- cii. An Act for repairing the Turnpike Road from *Barnstaple* to *Braunton* in the County of *Devon*, and for making certain new Lines of Road to communicate with the same.
- ciii. An Act for repairing and improving the Roads commonly called the *Sedgley Roads*, in the County of *Stafford*, and for making a new Line of Road connected therewith in the said County.
- civ. An Act for repairing the Road from *Dewsbury* to *Leeds* in the West Riding of the County of *York*, and for making and repairing a new Line of Road leading therefrom.
- cv. An Act to amend an Act passed in the Eleventh Year of the Reign of King *George* the Fourth, for repairing and improving the Road from *Brighton* to *Shoreham* and *Lancing* in the County of *Sussex*, and for other Purposes connected therewith.
- cvi. An Act for repairing and improving the Road from *Selby* to *Leeds* in the West Riding of the County of *York*.
- c. vii. An Act for repairing, improving, and maintaining the Road from a Place in the Parish of *Nuffield* in the County of *Oxford*, through *Wallingford* and *Wantage*, to *Faringdon* in the County of *Berks*.
- c. viii. An Act for more effectually repairing, maintaining, and improving certain Roads leading to and from the City of *Lincoln*.
- c. ix. An Act for repairing the Turnpike Road from *Tinsley* to *Doncaster*, and for making certain new Lines of Road to communicate with the same, all in the West Riding of the County of *York*.
- cx. An Act for making and maintaining a Turnpike Road from *Cripps Corner* in the Parish of *Bewhurst* in the County of *Sussex* to *Gills Green* in the Parish of *Hawkhurst* in the County of *Kent*.
- cxi. An Act for repairing and maintaining the Road from the *Mayors Stone* in *Abingdon* to *Chilton Pond* in the County of *Berks*.
- cxii. An Act for improving the Streets and public Places, and erecting a Town Hall and improving the Markets, in the Township of *Blackburn* in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.
- cxiii. An Act for the better Drainage of Lands in *Bourn North Fen* and *Dyke Fen* in the Manor and Parish of *Bourn* in the County of *Lincoln*.
- cxiv. An Act for maintaining and repairing, as Turnpike, a certain Road commencing at or near the North-west Gate of the *Woodside Hotel* Stable-yard in the Township or Chapelry of *Birkenhead*, and terminating at or near the Cottage of *Henry Berry* in the Township of *Little Meols* in the Parish of *West Kirby* in the County of *Chester*, and for levying Tolls for that Purpose.

PRIVATE ACTS.

PRIVATE ACTS,

PRINTED BY THE QUEEN'S PRINTER, AND

WHEREOF THE PRINTED COPIES MAY BE GIVEN IN EVIDENCE.

1. **A**N Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Barnack with Pilegate and Southorpe* in the County of *Northampton*.
2. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Collyweston*, and within the Precincts of *West Hay*, in the County of *Northampton*.
3. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Manor of *Eccleshill* in the Parish of *Bradford* in the West Riding of the County of *York*.
4. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Bury* in the County of *Sussex*.
5. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Eccleshall* in the County of *Stafford*.
6. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Gamlingay* in the County of *Cambridge*.
7. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Manor of *Waningore* in the County of *Sussex*.
8. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Uplyme* in the County of *Devon*.
9. An Act for the Division of the Rectory of *Winwick* in the County Palatine of *Lancaster*.
10. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Bedingham* in the County of *Norfolk*.
11. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Upper Heyford* in the County of *Oxford*.
12. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Cheveley* in the County of *Cambridge*.
13. An Act to amend an Act of the last Session of Parliament for inclosing Lands in the Parishes of *Whittlesea Saint Mary* and *Whittlesea Saint Andrew* in the County of *Cambridge*.
14. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Marsh Gibbon* in the County of *Buckingham*.
15. An Act for dividing, allotting, and inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Elsing* in the County of *Norfolk*.
16. An Act for inclosing the Commons, Drovers, Banks, and Waste Lands in the Parishes of *Leverington*, *Tid Saint Giles*, and *Outwell*, in the *Isle of Ely* in the County of *Cambridge*.
17. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Manor and Tithing of *Olveston* within the Parish of *Olveston* in the County of *Gloucester*.
18. An Act for inclosing the Commons and Waste Lands in the Township and Manor of *Brimington* in the County of *Derby*.
19. An Act for dividing, allotting, and inclosing the Commons and Waste Lands lying within the Hamlet of *Coundon* in the County of *Warwick*, and the Hamlet of *Keresley* in the County of *Warwick*, and County of the City of *Coventry*, or one of them.
20. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Whitmore* in the County of *Stafford*.
21. An Act for inclosing and improving Lands in the Parishes of *Saint Helen* and *Saint Nicholas*, *Abingdon*, in the County of *Berks*.
22. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Parish of *Great Horwood* in the County of *Buckingham*.
23. An Act for setting out and allotting certain Portions of the Lands in *Whaddon Chase* in the County of *Buckingham* in lieu of the Common Rights upon the said Chase, and for extinguishing such Common Rights.
24. An Act for severing the Chapelry of *Roxley Regis* from the Vicarage of *Cleat* in the County of *Stafford*; and for the Sale of certain Lands situate in the Parish of *Roxley Regis*, and belonging to the Vicarage of *Cleat* with the Chapelry of *Roxley Regis* annexed, and thereby providing a Residence and Maintenance for the Curate or Officiating Minister of *Roxley Regis*; and for other Purposes.
25. An Act to empower the Dean and Chapter of *Westminster* to grant Building Leases in certain Parts of the City of *Westminster*; and for other Purposes.
26. An Act to confirm to Sir *Edward Bourger Smyth* Baronet the Advowson of District Churches within the Parish of *Saint Gilce*, *Camberwell*, in the County of *Surry*.
27. An Act for vesting certain Real Estate devised by the Will of *Thomas Whittaker*, Esquire, deceased, in Trustees, upon Trust to be sold, and for laying out the Money arising therefrom in the Purchase of other Estates, to be settled to the same Uses.
28. An Act for extending the Powers of the Trustees under the Settlement on the Marriage of the Reverend *James Jackson* with Miss *Eliza Houlton*.
29. An Act for empowering the Trustees of *Henry Bickerton Whitehouse* and *Mary* his Wife, and of the Children of the said *Mary Whitehouse*, to lease or sell the Mines and Minerals in and under and to lease Part of the Surface of a certain Freehold Estate called the *Hill Top Farm*, situate in the Parish of *Westbromwich* in the County of *Stafford*, and also to sell the Estate.
30. An Act for vesting the Lands and Barony of *Lundin* and the Lands of *Aithernie*, and certain other Heritages, in favour of *James Brakine Wemyss*, Esquire, and his Heirs and Assigns, in Fee Simple, on Condition of certain Parts of the Lands and Barony of *Methill*, and other Lands, being settled in lieu thereof in Fee Tail.

## PRIVATE ACTS.

31. An Act to authorize the granting of Leases and Conveyances for Mining Purposes of Estates at *Northwingsfield* in the County of *Derby*, the Property of *Frederick Lord Clay* and his infant Son *Richard Clay*.
32. An Act for vesting certain Estates situate in the County of *Leicester*, devised by the Will of *Catherine Moyer* Spinster, in Trustees, upon Trust to convey the same in Exchange for certain other Estates situate in the same County.
33. An Act for selling a Part of the Entailed Estate of *Newton* in the County of *Haddington*, and applying the Price towards discharging Part of the Debts incurred in improving the said Entailed Estate; and also for exchanging certain Parts of the Entailed Estate for Lands held in Fee Simple.
34. An Act to amend "An Act for vesting Estates of which *Gifford Warriner*, Esquire, a Lunatic, is Tenant in Tail, in Trustees for Sale, and also for effecting a Partition of certain Parts thereof, and for granting Leases;" and to enable the said Trustees to make Conveyances in Fee, subject to Rent-charges, and Leases for long Terms of Years, at reserved Rents, of the unsold Portions of the said Estates, and to make Sale of the Rent-charges and of the Reversions in Fee expectant on the Leases.
35. An Act for carrying into effect a Contract between *Edward Gresley Stone* and *John Attwood*, Esquires for the Sale of the *Coptfold Hall* Estate in the County of *Essex* to the said *John Attwood*, and for investing the Purchase Money in other Estates, to be settled to the same Uses; and also for authorizing the Exchange of certain Lands and Hereditaments in the Counties of *Worcester* and *Gloucester*, devised by the Will of *John Stone*, Esquire, deceased.
36. An Act for authorizing Leases to be granted of the *Burross* Estate in the Parish of *Kingswinford* in the County of *Stafford*, devised by the Will of *Thomas Westwood* deceased to *Thomas Westwood* during his Life, and after his Decease upon the Trusts of such Will.
37. An Act to enable the Trustees of the Trust Estates in *Scotland* of *John Bowes Lyon*, late Earl of *Strathmore* and *Kinghorn*, deceased, to advance and pay certain yearly Sums on behalf of *Thomas George Lyon Bowes* commonly called *Lord Glamis*, his Grand-nephew, who in certain Events will become entitled to the Trust Estates in question.
38. An Act to enable the Trustees of the Hospital of *Saint John the Baptist* in the City of *Winchester* to effect an Exchange with *Sir Edmund Antrobus*, Baronet, under the Authority of the Court of Chancery.
39. An Act to enable the Trustees of the Will of the late *Peter Dutton*, Esquire to make Sale of Part of the Estates devised by the same Will, and to lay out the Money arising from any such Sale in the Purchase of other Estates, to be settled to the subsisting Uses of the said Will, and to make Conveyances in Fee, or Demises for long Terms of Years, of other Part of the said Estates, for the Purpose of building on and otherwise improving the same, and also to apply a Sum of Money arising from the Sale of Part of the Estates devised by the said Will in carrying the aforesaid Objects and Purposes into execution.
40. An Act for ascertaining and defining the Glebe Land of the Rector of *Abington* alias *Abingdon* in the County of *Northampton*, and for building a Parsonage House for such Rector.
41. An Act for effecting a Sale and Conveyance from the Feoffees or Trustees of the Parish of *Saint Mildred Bread Street* in the City of *London* to the Fishmongers' Company, and for investing the Purchase Money in other Estates, to be settled to the same Uses.
42. An Act to amend an Act passed in the Second and Third Years of the Reign of Her present Majesty, intituled *An Act to authorize the Sale of certain Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments in the Counties of Kent and Northampton, formerly belonging to William Marshall of Clifford's Inn in the City of London, Gentleman, deceased, and for other Purposes incidental thereto*.
43. An Act for effecting an Exchange between the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of *Great Yarmouth* in the County of *Norfolk* and the Trustees of a Charity in the said Borough called "The Children's Hospital."
44. An Act for enlarging the Power to grant Leases contained in the Will of *Alexander Lyon Emerson* Doctor of Medicine, deceased; and for other Purposes.
45. An Act to enable the Trustees of the *Oldbury* Charity to grant Building Leases.
46. An Act for vesting in the Overseers of the Poor of the Township of *Blackburn* in the County Palatine of *Lancaster* Parts of the *Town's Moor*, for Sale or other Disposal thereof.
47. An Act to enable the Trustees of the Chapelry of *Smethwick* in the County of *Stafford* to demise Coal and other Mines, and to grant Building Leases.

PRIVATE ACTS, NOT PRINTED.

PRIVATE ACTS,

NOT PRINTED.

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| <p>48. An Act for naturalizing <i>Henry William Ferdinand Bolckow</i>.</p> <p>49. An Act for naturalizing <i>Gustavus Heyn</i>.</p> <p>50. An Act for naturalizing <i>Frederick Salomo Bogdan</i>.</p> <p>51. An Act for inclosing Lands in the Townships or Divisions of <i>Dovenby</i> and <i>Papcastle</i> in the Parish of <i>Bridekirk</i> in the County of <i>Cumberland</i>.</p> <p>52. An Act for naturalizing <i>Charles Christopher Burgett</i>.</p> <p>53. An Act to dissolve the Marriage of <i>Nathaniel Bogle French Shawe</i>, Esquire with <i>Charlotte Shawe</i> his now Wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other Purposes therein mentioned.</p> <p>54. An Act to dissolve the Marriage of <i>John Pascal Larkins</i> Attorney at Law with <i>Eliza Bird</i> his now Wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other Purposes therein mentioned.</p> | <p>55. An Act to dissolve the Marriage of <i>Harry Dent Goring</i>, Esquire with <i>Augusta</i> his now Wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other Purposes therein mentioned.</p> <p>56. An Act to dissolve the Marriage of <i>Thomas Wyatt</i> Esquire with <i>Elizabeth Grey</i> his now Wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other Purposes therein mentioned.</p> <p>57. An Act to dissolve the Marriage of <i>John Hall</i>, Esquire with <i>Jemima Caroline</i> his now Wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other Purposes.</p> <p>58. An Act for naturalizing <i>Marzio Francois Giordano</i>.</p> <p>59. An Act for naturalizing <i>Philipp Jacob Passavant</i>, and <i>Philipp Johann Passavant</i>, <i>Theodor Passavant</i>, <i>Mary Magdalen Johanna Passavant</i>, <i>Jacob Rudolph Passavant</i>, and <i>Henrietta Mariane Laura Louisa Augusta Passavant</i>, his Children.</p> |
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FOR THE FOURTH SESSION OF

### THE THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

4 VICTORIÆ,

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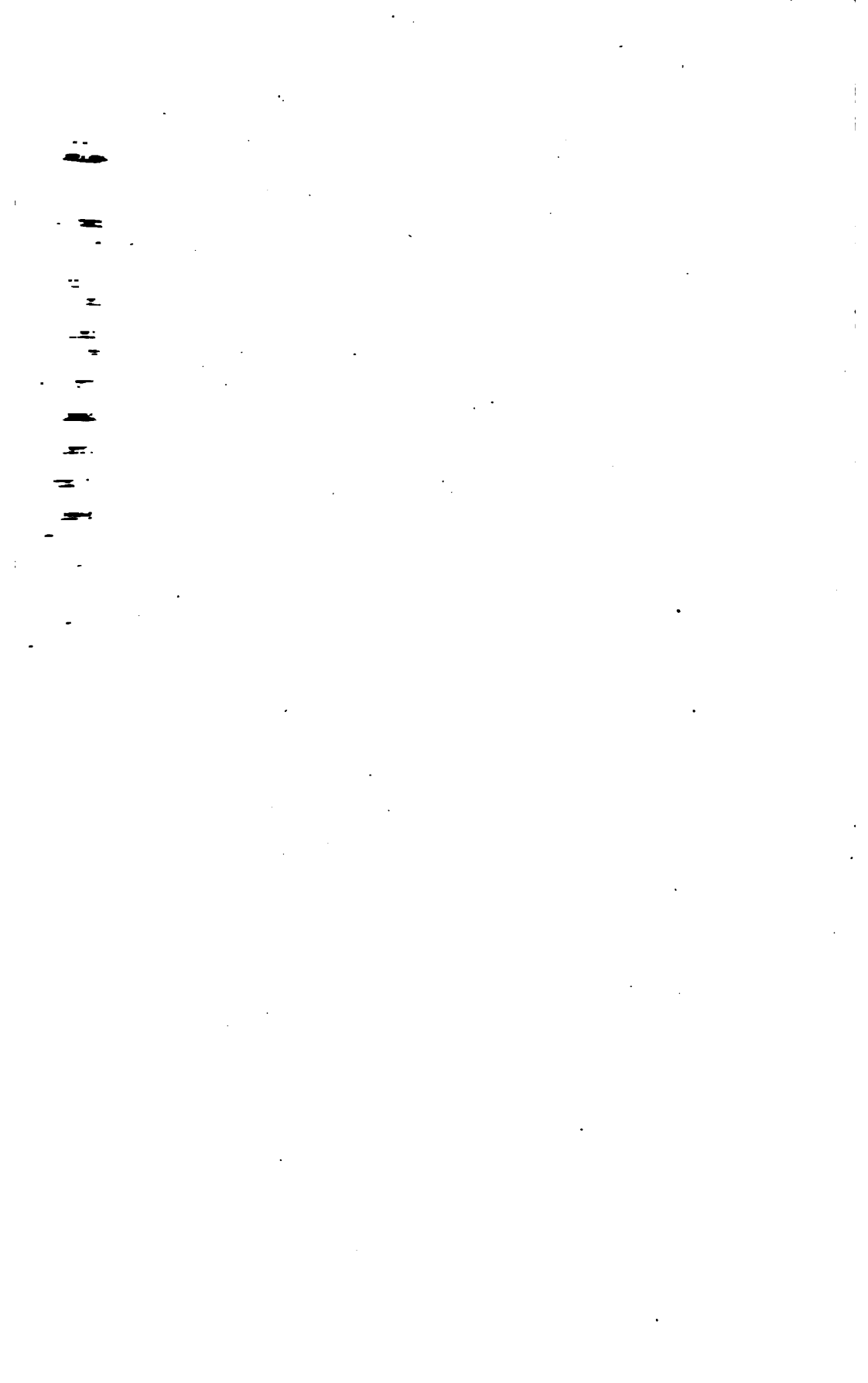
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